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Prillisk, the birth place of Wm. Carleton

# TRAITS AND STORIES

OF THE

# IRISH PEASANTRY

BY

WILLIAM CARLETON,

WITH AN

AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL INTRODUCTION,

Illustrative Notes & Graphic Illustrations,

ON WOOD AND STEEL,

BY

PHIZ, HARVEY, MAC MANUS & FRANKLIN.

VOL. II.

Dublin:

PUBLISHED BY WM CURRY, JUNR & Co SACKVILLE STET

AND W S ORR & Co PATERNOSTER ROW

LONDON.

Russell Inst.

Lovell's Co P N Row

LONDON:
BRADBURY AND EVANS, PRINTERS, WHITEFRIARS.

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No pen can do justice to the extravagance and frolic inseparable from the character of the Irish people; nor has any system of philosophy been discovered that can with moral fitness be applied to them. Phrenology fails to explain it; for, so far as the craniums of Irishmen are concerned, according to the most capital surveys hitherto made and reported on, it appears that, inasmuch as their moral and intellectual organs predominate over the physical and sensual, the people ought, therefore, to be ranked at the very tip-top of morality. We would warn the phrenologists, however, not to be too sanguine in drawing inferences from an examination of Paddy's head. Heaven only knows the scenes in which it is engaged, and the protuberances created by a long life of hard fighting. Many an organ and development is brought out on it by the cudgel, that never would have appeared had Nature been left to herself.

Drinking, fighting, and swearing, are the three great characteristics of every people. Paddy's love of fighting and of whisky has been long proverbial; and of his tact in swearing much has also been said. But there is one department of oath-making in which he stands unrivalled and unapproachable; I mean the *alibi*. There is where he shines, where his oath, instead of being a mere matter of fact or opinion, rises up into the dignity of epic narrative, containing within itself all the complexity of

machinery, harmony of parts, and fertility of invention, by which your true epic should be characterised.

The Englishman, whom we will call the historian in swearing, will depose to the truth of this or that fact, but there the line is drawn: he swears his oath so far as he knows, and stands still. "I 'm sure, for my part, I don't know; I 've said all I knows about it," and beyond this his besotted intellect goeth not.

The Scotchman, on the other hand, who is the metaphysician in swearing, sometimes borders on equivocation. He decidedly goes farther than the Englishman, not because he has less honesty, but more prudence. He will assent to, or deny a proposition; for the Englishman's "I don't know," and the Scotchman's "I dinna ken," are two very distinct assertions when properly understood. The former stands out a monument of dulness, an insuperable barrier against inquiry, ingenuity, and fancy; but the latter frequently stretches itself so as to embrace hypothetically a particular opinion.

But Paddy! Put *him* forward to prove an *alibi* for his fourteenth or fifteenth cousin, and you will be gratified by the pomp, pride, and circumstance of true swearing. Every oath with him *is* an epic—pure poetry, abounding with humour, pathos, and the highest order of invention and talent. He is not at ease, it is true, under *facts;* there is something too common-place in dealing with them, which his genius scorns. But his flights—his flights are beautiful; and his episodes admirable and happy. In fact, he is an *improvisatore* at oath-taking; with this difference, that his *extempore* oaths possess all the ease and correctness of labour and design.

He is not, however, *altogether* averse to facts; but, like your true poet, he veils, changes, and modifies them with such skill, that they possess all the merit and graces of fiction. If he happen to make an assertion incompatible with the plan of the piece, his genius acquires fresh energy, enables him to widen the design, and to create new machinery, with such happiness of adaptation, that what appeared out of proportion or character is made, in his hands, to contribute to the general strength and beauty of the oath.

'T is true, there is nothing perfect under the sun; but if there were, it would certainly be Paddy at an *alibi*. Some flaws, no doubt, occur; some slight inaccuracies may be noticed by a critical eye; an occasional anachronism stands out, and a mistake or so in geography; but let it be recollected that Paddy's *alibi* is but a human production; let us not judge him by harsher rules than those which we apply to Homer, Virgil, or Shakspeare.

"Aliquando bonus dormitat Homerus," is allowed on all hands. Virgil made Dido and Æneas contemporary, though they were not so; and Shakspeare, by the creative power of his genius, changed an inland town into a sea-port. Come, come, have bowels. Let epic swearing be treated with the same courtesy shown to epic poetry, that is, if both are the production of a rare genius. I maintain, that when Paddy commits a blemish he is too harshly admonished for it. When he soars out of sight here, as occasionally happens, does he not frequently alight somewhere

about Sydney Bay, much against his own inclination? And if he puts forth a hasty production, is he not compelled, for the space of seven or fourteen years, to revise his oath? But, indeed, few works of fiction are properly encouraged in Ireland.

It would be unpardonable in us, however, to overlook the beneficial effects of Paddy's peculiar genius in swearing *alibis*. Some persons, who display their own egregious ignorance of morality, may be disposed to think that it tends to lessen the obligation of an oath, by inducing a habit among the people of swearing to what is not true. We look upon such persons as very dangerous to Ireland and to the repeal of the Union; and we request them not to push their principles too far in the disturbed parts of the country. Could society hold together a single day, if nothing but truth were *spoken?* Would not law and lawyers soon become obsolete, if nothing but truth were *sworn?* What would become of parliament if truth alone were uttered there? Its annual proceedings might be dispatched in a month. Fiction is the basis of society, the bond of commercial prosperity, the channel of communication between nation and nation, and not unfrequently the interpreter between a man and his own conscience.

For these, and many other reasons which we could adduce, we say with Paddy, "Long life to fiction!" When associated with swearing, it shines in its brightest colours. What, for instance, is calculated to produce the best and purest of the moral virtues so beautifully, as the swearing an *alibi?* Here are fortitude and a love of freedom resisting oppression; for it is well known that all law is oppression in Ireland.

There is compassion for the peculiar state of the poor boy, who, perhaps, *only* burned a family in their beds; benevolence to prompt the generous effort in his behalf; disinterestedness to run the risk of becoming an involuntary absentee; fortitude in encountering a host of brazen-faced lawyers; patience under the unsparing gripe of a cross-examiner; perseverance in conducting the oath to its close against a host of difficulties; and friendship, which bottoms and crowns them all.

Paddy's merits, however, touching the *alibi*, rest not here. Fiction on these occasions only teaches him how to perform a *duty*. It may be, that he is under the obligation of a previous oath *not* to give evidence *against* certain of his friends and associates. Now, could anything in the whole circle of religion or ethics be conceived that renders the epic style of swearing so incumbent upon Paddy? There is a kind of moral fitness in all things; for where the necessity of invention exists, it is consolatory to reflect that the ability to invent is bestowed along with it.

Next to the *alibi* comes Paddy's powers in sustaining a cross-examination. Many persons think that *this* is his *forte;* but we cannot yield to such an opinion, nor compromise his originality of conception in the scope and plan of an *alibi*. It is marked by a minuteness of touch, and a peculiarity of expression which give it every appearance of real life. The circumstances are so well imagined, the groups so naturally disposed, the colouring so finished, and the back-ground in such fine perspective, that the whole picture presents you with such keeping and *vraisemblance*, as could be accomplished only by the genius of a master.

In point of interest, however, we must admit that his ability in a cross-examination ranks next to his skill in *planning* an *alibi*. There is, in the former, a versatility of talent that keeps him always ready; a happiness of retort, generally disastrous to the wit of the most established cross-examiner; an apparent simplicity, which is quite as impenetrable as the lawyer's assurance; a *vis comica*, which puts the court in tears; and an originality of sorrow, that often convulses it with laughter. His resources, when he is pressed, are inexhaustible; and the address with which he contrives to gain time, that he may suit his reply to the object of his evidence, is beyond all praise. And yet his appearance when he mounts the table is anything but prepossessing; a sheepish look, and a loose-jointed frame of body, wrapped in a frieze great-coat, do not promise much. Nay, there is often a rueful blank expression in his visage, which might lead a stranger to anticipate nothing but blunders and dulness. This, however, is hypocrisy of the first water. Just observe the tact with which he places his caubeen upon the table, his kippeen across it, and the experienced air with which he pulls up the waistbands of his breeches, absolutely girding his loins for battle. 'T is true his blue eye has at present nothing remarkable in it, except a drop or two of the native; but that is *not* remarkable.

When the direct examination has been concluded, nothing can be finer than the simplicity with which he turns round to the lawyer who is to cross-examine him. Yet, as if conscious that firmness and caution are his main guards, he again pulls up his waistbands with a more vigorous hitch, looks shyly into the very eyes of his opponent, and awaits the first blow.

The question at length comes; and Paddy, after having raised the collar of his big coat on his shoulder, and twisted up the shoulder along with it, directly puts the query back to the lawyer, without altering a syllable of it, for the purpose of ascertaining more accurately whether that is the precise question that has been put to him; for Paddy is conscientious. Then is the science displayed on both sides. The one, a veteran, trained in all the technicalities of legal puzzles, irony, blarney, sarcasm, impudence, stock jokes, quirks, rigmarolery, brow-beating, ridicule, and subtilty; the other a poor peasant, relying only upon the justice of a good cause and the gifts of nature; without either experience or learning, and with nothing but his native modesty to meet the forensic effrontery of his antagonist.

Our readers will perceive that the odds are a thousand to one against Paddy; yet, when he replies to a hackneyed genius at cross-examination, how does it happen that he uniformly elicits those roars of laughter which rise in the court, and convulse it from the judge to the crier? In this laugh, which is usually at the expense of the cross-examiner, Paddy himself always joins, so that the counsel has the double satisfaction of being made not only the jest of the judge and his brother lawyers, but of the ragged witness whom he attempted to make ridiculous.

It is not impossible that this merry mode of dispensing justice may somewhat encourage Paddy in that independence of mind which relishes not the idea of being altogether bound by oaths that are too often

Preparing for Examination.

administered with a jocular spirit. To most of the Irish in general an oath is a solemn, to some, an awful thing. Of this wholesome reverence for its sanction, two or three testimonies given in a court of justice usually cure them. The indifferent, business-like manner in which the oaths are put, the sing-song tone of voice, the rapid utterance of the words, give to this solemn act an appearance of excellent burlesque, which ultimately renders the whole proceedings remarkable for the absence of truth and reality; but, at the same time, gives them unquestionable merit as a dramatic representation, abounding with fiction, well related and ably acted.

Thumb-kissing is another feature in Paddy's adroitness too important to be passed over in silence. Here his tact shines out again! It would be impossible for him, in many cases, to meet the perplexities of a cross-examination so cleverly as he does, if he did not believe that he had, by kissing his thumb instead of the book, actually taken no oath, and consequently given to himself a wider range of action. We must admit, however, that this very circumstance involves him in difficulties which are sometimes peculiarly embarrassing. Taking everything into consideration, the prospect of freedom for his sixth cousin, the consciousness of having kissed his thumb, or the consoling reflection that he swore only on a *Law* Bible, it must be granted that the opportunities presented by a cross-examination are well calculated to display his wit, humour, and fertility of invention. He is accordingly great in it; but still we maintain that his execution of an *alibi* is his ablest performance, comprising, as it does, both the conception and construction of the work.

Both the oaths and imprecations of the Irish display, like those who use them, indications of great cruelty and great humour. Many of the former exhibit that ingenuity which comes out when Paddy is on his cross-examination in a court of justice. Every people, it is true, have resorted to the habit of mutilating or changing in their oaths the letters which form the Creator's name; but we question if any have surpassed the Irish in the cleverness with which they accomplish it. Mock oaths are habitual to Irishmen in ordinary conversation; but the use of any or all of them is not considered to constitute an oath: on the contrary, they are in the mouths of many who would not, except upon a very solemn occasion indeed, swear by the name of the Deity in its proper form.

The ingenuity of their mock oaths is sufficient to occasion much perplexity to any one disposed to consider it in connexion with the character and moral feelings of the people. Whether to note it as a reluctance on their part to incur the guilt of an oath, or as a proof of habitual tact in evading it by artifice, is manifestly a difficulty hard to be overcome. We are decidedly inclined to the former; for although there is much laxity of principle among Irishmen, naturally to be expected from men whose moral state has been neglected by the legislature, and deteriorated by political and religious asperity, acting upon quick passions and badly regulated minds—yet we know that they possess, after all, a strong, but vague undirected sense of devotional feeling and reverence, which are associated with great crimes and awfully dark shades of character. This explains one chief cause of the sympathy which is felt in Ireland for

criminals from whom the law exacts the fatal penalty of death; and it also accounts, independently of the existence of any illegal association, for the terrible retribution inflicted upon those who come forward to prosecute them. It is not in Ireland with criminals as in other countries, where the character of a murderer or incendiary is notoriously bad, as resulting from a life of gradual profligacy and villany. Far from it. In Ireland you will find those crimes perpetrated by men who are good fathers, good husbands, good sons, and good neighbours—by men who would share their last morsel or their last shilling with a fellow-creature in distress—who would generously lose their lives for a man who had obliged them, provided he had not incurred their enmity—and who would protect a defenceless stranger as far as lay in their power.

There are some mock oaths among Irishmen which must have had their origin amongst those whose habits of thought were much more elevated than could be supposed to characterise the lower orders. "By the powers of death" is never now used as we have written it; but the ludicrous travestie of it, "by the powdhers o' delf," is quite common. Of this and other mock oaths it may be right to observe, that those who swear by them are in general ignorant of their proper origin. There are some, however, of this description whose original form is well known. One of these Paddy displays considerable ingenuity in using. "By the cross" can scarcely be classed under the mock oaths, but the manner in which it is pressed into asseverations is amusing. When Paddy is affirming a truth he swears "by the crass" simply, and this with him is an oath of considerable obligation. He generally, in order to render it more impressive, accompanies it with suitable action, that is, he places the forefinger of each hand across, that he may assail you through two senses instead of one. On the contrary, when he intends to hoax you by asserting what is not true, he ingeniously multiplies the oath, and swears "by the five crasses," that is by his own five fingers, placing at the same time his four fingers and his thumbs across each other in a most impressive and vehement manner. Don't believe him then—the knave is lying as fast as possible, and with no remorse. "By the crass o' Christ" is an oath of much solemnity, and seldom used in a falsehood. Paddy also often places two bits of straws across, and sometimes two sticks, upon which he swears with an appearance of great heat and sincerity—*sed caveto!*

Irishmen generally consider iron as a sacred metal. In the interior of the country, the thieves (but few in number) are frequently averse to stealing it. Why it possesses this hold upon their affections it is difficult to say, but it is certain that they rank it among their sacred things, consider that to find it is lucky, and nail it over their doors when found in the convenient shape of a horse-shoe. It is also used as a medium of asserting truth. We believe, however, that the sanction it imposes is not very strong. "By this blessed iron!"—"by this blessed an' holy iron!" are oaths of an inferior grade; but if the circumstance on which they are founded be a matter of indifference, they seldom depart from truth in using them.

We have said that Paddy, when engaged in a fight, is never at a loss for a weapon, and we may also affirm, that he is never at a loss for an

oath. When relating a narrative, or some other circumstance of his own invention, if contradicted, he will corroborate it, in order to sustain his credit or produce the proper impression, by an abrupt oath upon the first object he can seize. "Arrah, nonsense! by this pipe in my hand, it's as thrue as"—and then, before he completes the illustration, he goes on with a fine specimen of equivocation—"By the stool I'm sittin' an, *it is;* an' what more would you have from me barrin' I take my book oath of it?" Thus does he, under the mask of an insinuation, induce you to believe that he has actually sworn it, whereas the oath is always left undefined and incomplete.

Sometimes he is exceedingly comprehensive in his adjurations, and swears upon a magnificent scale; as, for instance,—"By the contints of all the books that ever wor opened an' shut, it's as thrue as the sun to the dial." This certainly leaves "the five crasses" immeasurably behind. However, be cautious, and not too confident in taking so sweeping and learned an oath upon trust, notwithstanding its imposing effect. We grant, indeed, that an oath which comprehends within its scope all the learned libraries of Europe, including even the Alexandrian of old, is not only an erudite one, but establishes in a high degree the taste of the swearer, and displays on his part an uncommon grasp of intellect. Still we recommend you, whenever you hear an alleged fact substantiated by it, to set your ear as sharply as possible; for, after all, it is more than probable that every book by which he has sworn might be contained in a nutshell. The secret may be briefly explained:—Paddy is in the habit of substituting the word *never* for ever. "By all the books that *never* wor opened or shut," the reader perceives, is only a flourish of trumpets —a mere delusion of the enemy.

In fact, Paddy has oaths rising gradually from the lying ludicrous to the superstitious solemn, each of which finely illustrates the nature of the subject to which it is applied. When he swears "By the contints o' Moll Kelly's Primer," or "By the piper that played afore Moses," you are, perhaps, as strongly inclined to believe him as when he draws upon a more serious oath; that is, you almost regret the thing is not the gospel that Paddy asserts it to be. In the former sense, the humorous narrative which calls forth the laughable burlesque of "By the piper o' Moses," is usually the richest lie in the whole range of fiction.

Paddy is, in his ejaculatory, as well as in all his other mock oaths, a kind of smuggler in morality, imposing as often as he can upon his own conscience, and upon those who exercise spiritual authority over him. Perhaps more of his oaths are blood-stained than would be found among the inhabitants of all Christendom put together.

Paddy's oaths in his amours are generally rich specimens of humorous knavery and cunning. It occasionally happens—but for the honour of our virtuous countrywomen, we say but rarely—that by the honey of his flattering and delusive tongue, he succeeds in placing some unsuspecting girl's reputation in rather a hazardous predicament. When the priest comes to investigate the affair, and to cause him to make compensation to the innocent creature who suffered by his blandishments, it is almost uniformly ascertained that, in order to satisfy her scruples as to the

honesty of his promises, he had sworn marriage to her *on a book of ballads ! ! !* In other cases *blank books* have been used for the same purpose.

If, however, you wish to pin Paddy up in a corner, get him a Relic, a Catholic prayer-book, or a Douay Bible to swear upon. Here is where the fox—notwithstanding all his turnings and windings upon heretic Bibles, books of ballads, or mock oaths—is caught at last. The strongest principle in him is superstition. It may be found as the prime mover in his best and worst actions. An atrocious man, who is superstitious, will perform many good and charitable actions, with a hope that their merit in the sight of God may cancel the guilt of his crimes. On the other hand, a good man, who is superstitiously the slave of his religious opinions, will lend himself to those illegal combinations, whose object is, by keeping ready a system of organised opposition to an heretical government, to fulfil, if a political crisis should render it practicable, the absurd prophecies of Pastorini and Columbkil. Although the prophecies of the former would appear to be out of date to a rational reader, yet Paddy, who can see farther into prophecy than any rational reader, honestly believes that Pastorini has left for those who are superstitiously given, sufficient range of expectation in several parts of his work.

We might enumerate many other oaths in frequent use among the peasantry; but as our object is not to detail them at full length, we trust that those already specified may be considered sufficient to enable our readers to get a fuller insight into their character, and their moral influence upon the people.

The next thing which occurs to us in connexion with the present subject, is *cursing;* and here again Paddy holds the first place. His imprecations are often full, bitter, and intense. Indeed, there is more poetry and epigrammatic point in them than in those of any other country in the world.

We find it a difficult thing to enumerate the Irish curses, so as to do justice to a subject so varied and so liable to be shifted and improved by the fertile genius of those who send them abroad. Indeed, to reduce them into order and method would be a task of considerable difficulty. Every occasion, and every fit of passion, frequently produce a new curse, perhaps equal in bitterness to any that has gone before it.

Many of the Irish imprecations are difficult to be understood, having their origin in some historical event, or in poetical metaphors that require a considerable process of reasoning to explain them. Of this twofold class is that general one, "The curse of Cromwell on you!" which means, may you suffer all that a tyrant like Cromwell would inflict! and "The curse o' the crows upon you!" which is probably an allusion to the Danish invasion—a raven being the symbol of Denmark; or it may be tantamount to "May you rot on the hills, that the crows may feed upon your carcase!" Perhaps it may thus be understood to imprecate death upon you or some member of your house—alluding to the superstition of rooks hovering over the habitations of the sick, when the malady with which they are afflicted is known to be fatal. Indeed, the latter must certainly be the meaning of it, as is evident from the proverb of "Die, an' give the crow a puddin'."

"Hell's cure to you!—the devil's luck to you!—high hanging to you!—hard feeding to you!—a short coorse to you!" are all pretty intense, and generally used under provocation and passion. In these cases the curses just mentioned are directed immediately to the offensive object, and there certainly is no want of the *malus animus* to give them energy. It would be easy to multiply the imprecations belonging to this class among the peasantry, but the task is rather unpleasant. There are a few, however, which, in consequence of their ingenuity, we cannot pass over: they are, in sooth, studies for the swearer. "May you never die till you see your own funeral!" is a very beautiful specimen of the periphrasis: it simply means, may you be hanged; for he who is hanged is humorously said to be favoured with a view of that sombre spectacle, by which they mean the crowd that attends an execution. To the same purpose is, "May you die wid a caper in your heel!"—"May you die in your pumps!"—"May your last dance be a hornpipe on the air!" These are all emblematic of hanging, and are uttered sometimes in jest, and occasionally in earnest. "May the grass grow before your door!" is highly imaginative and poetical. Nothing, indeed, can present the mind with a stronger or more picturesque emblem of desolation and ruin. Its malignity is terrible.

There are also mock imprecations as well as mock oaths. Of this character are, "The devil go with you an' sixpence, an' thin you'll want neither money nor company!" This humorous and considerate curse is generally confined to the female sex. When Paddy happens to be in a romping mood, and teases his sweetheart too much, she usually utters it with a countenance combating with smiles and frowns, whilst she stands in the act of pinning up her dishevelled hair; her cheek, particularly the one next Paddy, deepened into a becoming blush.

"Bad scran to you!" is another form seldom used in anger: it is the same as "Hard feeding to you!" "Bad win' to you!" is "Ill health to you!" it is nearly the same as "Consumin' (consumption) to you!" Two other imprecations come under this head, which we will class together, because they are counterparts of each other, with this difference, that one of them is the most subtilely and intensely withering in its purport that can well be conceived. The one is that common curse, "Bad 'cess to you!" that is, bad success to you: we may identify it with "Hard fortune to you!" The other is a keen one, indeed—"*Sweet* bad luck to you!" Now, whether we consider the epithet sweet as bitterly ironical, or deem it as a wish that prosperity may harden the heart to the accomplishment of future damnation, as in the case of Dives, we must in either sense grant that it is an oath of powerful hatred and venom. Occasionally the curse of "Bad luck to you!" produces an admirable retort, which is pretty common. When one man applies it to another, he is answered with "*Good* luck to you, thin; but *may neither of thim ever happen.*"

"Six eggs to you, an' half-a-dozen o' them rotten!"—like "The devil go with you an' sixpence!" is another of those pleasantries which mostly occur in the good-humoured *badinage* between the sexes. It implies disappointment.

There is a species of imprecation prevalent among Irishmen which we may term neutral. It is ended by the word *bit*, and merely results from a habit of swearing where there is no malignity of purpose. An Irishman, when corroborating an assertion, however true or false, will often say, "Bad luck to the bit but it is;"—"Divil fire the bit but it's thruth!"—"Damn the bit but it is!" and so on. In this form the mind is not moved, nor the passions excited: it is therefore probably the most insipid of all their imprecations.

Some of the most dreadful maledictions are to be heard among the confirmed mendicants of Ireland. The wit, the gall, and the poetry of these are uncommon. "May you melt off the earth like snow off the ditch!" is one of a high order and intense malignity; but it is not exclusively confined to mendicants, although they form that class among which it is most prevalent. Nearly related to this is, "May you melt like butther before a summer sun!" These are, indeed, essentially poetical; they present the mind with appropriate imagery, and exhibit a comparison perfectly just and striking. The former we think unrivalled.

Some of the Irish imprecations would appear to have come down to us from the Ordeals. Of this class, probably, are the following: "May this be poison to me!"—"May I be roasted on red-hot iron!" Others of them, from their boldness of metaphor, seem to be of Oriental descent. One expression, indeed, is strikingly so. When a deep offence is offered to an Irishman, under such peculiar circumstances that he cannot immediately retaliate, he usually replies to his enemy—"You'll sup sorrow for this!"—"You'll curse the day it happened!"—"I'll make you rub your heels together!" All these figurative denunciations are used for the purpose of intimating the pain and agony he will compel his enemy to suffer.

We cannot omit a form of imprecation for good, which is also habitual among the peasantry of Ireland. It is certainly harmless, and argues benevolence of heart. We mean such expressions as the following: "Salvation to me!—May I never do harm!—May I never do an ill turn!—May I never sin!". These are generally used by men who are blameless and peaceable in their lives—simple and well-disposed in their intercourse with the world.

At the head of those Irish imprecations which are dreaded by the people, the Excommunication, of course, holds the first and most formidable place. In the eyes of men of sense it is as absurd as it is illiberal; but to the ignorant and superstitious, who look upon it as anything but a *brutum fulmen*, it is terrible indeed.

Next in order are the curses of priests in their private capacity, pilgrims, mendicants, and idiots. Of those also Paddy entertains a wholesome dread; a circumstance which the pilgrim and mendicant turn with great judgment to their own account. Many a legend and anecdote do such chroniclers relate, when the family, with whom they rest for the night, are all seated around the winter hearth. These are often illustrative of the baneful effects of the poor man's curse. Of course they produce a proper impression; and, accordingly, Paddy avoids offending such persons in any way that might bring him under their displeasure.

A certain class of curses much dreaded in Ireland are those of the widow and the orphan. There is, however, something touching and beautiful in this fear of injuring the sorrowful and unprotected. It is, we are happy to say, a becoming and prominent feature in Paddy's character; for, to do him justice in his virtues as well as in his vices, we repeat that he cannot be surpassed in his humanity to the lonely widow and her helpless orphans. He will collect a number of his friends, and proceed with them in a body to plant her bit of potato ground, to reap her oats, to draw home her turf, or secure her hay. Nay, he will beguile her of her sorrows with a natural sympathy and delicacy that do him honour: his heart is open to her complaints, and his hand ever extended to assist her.

There is a strange opinion to be found in Ireland upon the subject of curses. The peasantry think that a curse, no matter how uttered, will fall on *something;* but that it depends upon the person against whom it is directed, whether or not it will descend on him. A curse, we have heard them say, will rest for seven years in the air, ready to alight upon the head of the person who provoked the malediction. It hovers over him, like a kite over its prey, watching the moment when he may be abandoned by his guardian angel: if this occurs, it shoots with the rapidity of a meteor on his head, and clings to him in the shape of illness, temptation, or some other calamity.

They think, however, that the blessing of one person may cancel the curse of another; but this opinion does not affect the theory we have just mentioned. When a man experiences an unpleasant accident, they will say, "He has had some poor body's curse;" and, on the contrary, when he narrowly escapes it, they say, "He has had some poor body's blessing."

There is no country in which the phrases of good-will and affection are so strong as in Ireland. The Irish language actually flows with the milk and honey of love and friendship. Sweet and palatable is it to the other sex, and sweetly can Paddy, with his deluding ways, administer it to them from the top of his mellifluous tongue, as a dove feeds her young, or as a kind mother her babe, shaping with her own pretty mouth every morsel of the delicate viands before it goes into that of the infant. In this manner does Paddy, seated behind a ditch, of a bright Sunday, when he ought to be at Mass, feed up some innocent girl, not with "false music," but with sweet words; for nothing more musical or melting than his brogue ever dissolved a female heart. Indeed, it is of the danger to be apprehended from the melody of his voice, that the admirable and appropriate proverb speaks; for when he addresses his sweetheart, under circumstances that justify suspicion, it is generally said—"Paddy 's feedin' her up wid false music."

What language has a phrase equal in beauty and tenderness to *cushla ma chree—pulse of my heart?* Can it be paralleled in the whole range of all that are, ever were, or ever will be spoken, for music, sweetness, and a knowledge of anatomy? If Paddy is unrivalled at swearing, he fairly throws the world behind him at the blarney. In professing friendship, and making love, give him but a *taste of the native*, and he is a walking honey-comb, that every woman who sees him wishes to have a

lick at; and Heaven knows, that frequently, at all times, and in all places, does he get himself *licked* on their account.

Another expression of peculiar force is *vick machree*—or, son of my heart. This is not only elegant, but affectionate, beyond almost any other phrase except the foregoing. It is, in a sense somewhat different from that in which the philosophical poet has used it, a beautiful comment upon the sentiment of "the child's the father of the man," uttered by the great, we might almost say, the glorious, Wordsworth.

We have seen many a youth, on more occasions than one, standing in profound affliction over the dead body of his aged father, exclaiming, "*Ahir, vick machree—vick machree—wuil thu marra wo'um? Wuil thu marra wo'um?* Father, son of my heart, son of my heart, art thou dead from me—art thou dead from me?" An expression, we think, under any circumstances, not to be surpassed in the intensity of domestic affection which it expresses; but under those alluded to, we consider it altogether elevated in exquisite and poetic beauty above the most powerful symbols of Oriental imagery.

A third phrase peculiar to love and affection, is "*Manim asthee hu*—or, My soul's within you." Every person acquainted with languages knows how much an idiom suffers by a literal translation. How beautiful, then, how tender and powerful, must those short expressions be, uttered, too, with a fervour of manner peculiar to a deeply feeling people, when, even after a literal translation, they carry so much of their tenderness and energy into a language whose genius is cold when compared to the glowing beauty of the Irish.

*Mavourneen dheelish*, too, is only a short phrase, but, coming warm and mellowed from Paddy's lips into the ear of his *colleen dhas*, it is a perfect spell—a sweet murmur, to which the *lenis susurrus* of the Hybla bees is, with all their honey, jarring discord. How tame is "My sweet darling," its literal translation, compared to its soft and lulling intonations. There is a dissolving, entrancing, beguiling, deluding, flattering, insinuating, coaxing, winning, inveigling, roguish, palavering, come-over-ing, comedhering, consenting, blarneying, killing, willing, charm in it, worth all the philtres that ever the gross knavery of a withered alchymist imposed upon the credulity of those who inhabit the *other* nations of the earth—for we don't read that these shrivelled philtre-mongers ever prospered in *Ireland*.

No, no—let Paddy alone. If he hates intensely, and effectually, he loves intensely, comprehensively, and gallantly. To love with power is a proof of a large soul, and to hate well is, according to the great moralist, a thing in itself to be loved. Ireland is, therefore, through all its sects, parties, and religions, an amicable nation. Their affections are, indeed, so vivid, that they scruple not sometimes to kill each other with kindness: but we hope that the march of love and friendship will not only keep pace with, but outstrip, the march of intellect.

Peter Connell was for many years of his life a pattern and a proverb for industry and sobriety. He first began the world as keeper of a shebeen-house at the cross-roads, about four miles from the town of Ballypoteen. He was decidedly an honest man to his neighbours, but a knave to excisemen, whom he hated by a kind of instinct that he had, which prompted him, in order to satisfy his conscience, to render them every practicable injury within the compass of his ingenuity. Shebeen-house keepers and excisemen have been, time out of mind, destructive of each other; the exciseman pouncing like a beast or bird of prey upon the shebeen man and his illicit spirits; the shebeen man staving in the exciseman, like a barrel of doublings, by a knock from behind a hedge, which sometimes sent him to that world which is emphatically called the world of spirits. For this, it sometimes happened that the shebeen man was hanged; but as his death only multiplied that of the excisemen in a geometrical ratio, the sharp-scented fraternity resolved, if possible, not to risk their lives, either by exposing themselves to the necessity of travelling by night, or prosecuting by day. In this they acted wisely and prudently: fewer of the unfortunate peasantry were shot in their rencounters with the yeomanry or military on such occasions, and the retaliations became by degrees less frequent, until, at length, the murder of a gauger became a rare occurrence in the country.

Peter, before his marriage, had wrought as labouring servant to a man who kept two or three private stills in those caverns among the remote mountains, to which the gauger never thought of penetrating, because he supposed that no human enterprise would have ever dreamt of advancing farther into them than appeared to *him* to be practicable. In this he was frequently mistaken; for though the still-house was in many cases inaccessible to horses, yet by the contrivance of *slipes*—a kind of sledge—a dozen men could draw a couple of sacks of barley with less trouble, and at a quicker pace, than if horses only had been employed. By this, and many other similar contrivances, the peasantry were often able to carry on the work of private distillation in places so distant, that few persons could suspect them as likely to be chosen for such purposes. The uncommon personal strength, the daring spirit, and great adroitness of Peter Connell, rendered him a very valuable acquisition to his master in the course of his illicit occupations. Peter was, in addition to his other qualities, sober and ready-witted, so that whenever the gauger made his appearance, his expedients to baffle him were often inimitable. Those expedients did not, however, always arise from the exigency of the moment; they were often deliberately, and with much exertion of ingenuity, planned by the proprietors and friends of such establishments, perhaps for weeks before the gauger's visit occurred. But, on the other hand, as the gauger's object was to take them, if possible, by surprise, it frequently happened that his appearance was as unexpected as it was unwelcome. It was *then* that the prompt ingenuity of the people was fully seen, felt, and understood by the baffled exciseman, who too often had just grounds for bitterly cursing their talent at outwitting him.

Peter served his master, as a kind of superintendent in such places,

until he gained the full knowledge of distilling, according to the processes used by the most popular adepts in the art. Having acquired this, he set up as a professor, and had excellent business. In the meantime, he had put together by degrees a small purse of money, to the amount of about twenty guineas,—no inconsiderable sum for a young Irishman who intends to begin the world on his own account. He accordingly married, and, as the influence of a wife is usually not to be controlled during the honey-moon, Mrs. Connell prevailed on Peter to relinquish his trade of distiller, and to embrace some other mode of life that might not render their living so much asunder necessary. Peter suffered himself to be prevailed upon, and promised to have nothing more to do with private distillation, as a distiller. One of the greatest curses attending this lawless business, is the idle and irregular habit of life which it gradually induces. Peter could not now relish the labour of an agriculturist, to which he had been bred, and yet he was too prudent to sit down and draw his own and his wife's support from so exhaustible a source as twenty guineas. Two or three days passed, during which "he cudgelled his brains," to use his own expression, in plans for future subsistence; two or three consultations were held with Ellish, in which their heads were laid together, and, as it was still the honey-moon, the subject-matter of the consultation, of course, was completely forgotten. Before the expiration of a second month, however, they were able to think of many other things, in addition to the fondlings and endearments of a new-married couple. Peter was every day becoming more his own man, and Ellish by degrees more her own woman. "The purple light of love," which had changed Peter's red head into a rich auburn, and his swivel eye into a knowing wink, exceedingly irresistible in his bachelorship, as he made her believe, to the country girls—had passed away, taking the aforesaid auburn along with it, and leaving nothing but the genuine carrot behind. Peter, too, on opening his eyes one morning about the beginning of the third month, perceived that his wife was, after all, nothing more than a thumping red-cheeked wench, with good eyes, a mouth rather large, and a nose very much resembling, in its curve, the seat of a saddle, allowing the top to correspond with the pummel.

"Pether," said she, "it 's like a dhrame to me that you 're neglectin' your business, alanna."

"Is it you, beauty? but, may be, you 'd first point out to me what business, barrin' buttherin' up yourself, I have to mind, you phanix bright?"

"Quit yourself, Pether! it 's time for you to give up your ould ways; you caught one bird wid them, an' that 's enough. What do you intind to do? It 's full time for you to be lookin' about you."

"Lookin' about me! What do you mane, Ellish?"

"The dickens a bit o' me thought of it," replied the wife, laughing at the unintentional allusion to the circumspect character of Peter's eyes,—"upon my faix, I didn't—ha, ha, ha!"

"Why, thin, but you 're full o' your fun, sure enough, if that 's what you 're at. Maybe, avourneen, if I had looked right afore me, as I ought to do, it 's Katty Murray an' her snug farm I 'd have, instead of"—

Peter hesitated. The rapid feelings of a woman, and an Irishwoman, quick and tender, had come forth and subdued him. She had *not* voluntarily alluded to his eyes; but on seeing Peter offended, she immediately expressed that sorrow and submission which are most powerful when accompanied by innocence, and when meekly assumed, to pacify rather than to convince. A tear started to her eye, and with a voice melted into unaffected tenderness, she addressed him, but he scarcely gave her time to speak.

"No, avourneen, no, I won't say what I was goin' to mintion. I won't indeed, Ellish, dear; an' forgive me for woundin' your feelins, *alanna dhas.** Hell resave her an' her farm! I dunna what put her into my head at all; but I thought you wor jokin' me about my eyes: an' sure if you war, acushla, that 's no rason that I 'd not allow you to do that an' more wid your own Pether. Give me a *slewsther*,† agrah—a sweet one, now!"

He then laid his mouth to hers, and immediately a sound, nearly resembling a pistol-shot, was heard through every part of the house. It was, in fact, a kiss upon a scale of such magnitude, that the Emperor of Morocco might not blush to be charged with it. A reconciliation took place, and in due time it was determined that Peter, as he understood poteen, should open a shebeen-house.

The moment this resolution was made, the wife kept coaxing him, until he took a small house at the cross-roads before alluded to, where, in the course of a short time, he was established, if not in his own line, yet in a mode of life approximating to it as nearly as the inclination of Ellish would permit. The cabin which they occupied had a kitchen in the middle, and a room at each end of it, in one of which was their own humble chaff bed, with its blue quilted drugget cover; in the other stood a couple of small tables, some stools, a short form, and one chair, being a present from his father-in-law. These constituted Peter's whole establishment, so far as it defied the gauger. To this we must add a five-gallon keg of spirits hid in the garden, and a roll of smuggled tobacco. From the former he bottled, over night, as much as was usually drank the following day; and from the tobacco, which was also kept under ground, he cut, with the same caution, as much as to-morrow's exigencies might require. This he kept in his coat pocket, a place where the gauger would never think of searching for it, divided into halfpenny and pennyworths, ounces or half-ounces, according as it might be required; and as he had it without duty, the liberal spirit in which he dealt it out to his neighbours soon brought him a large increase of custom.

Peter's wife was an excellent manager, and he himself a pleasant, good-humoured man, full of whim and inoffensive mirth. His powers of amusement were of a high order, considering his station in life and his want of education. These qualities contributed, in a great degree, to bring both the young and the old to his house during the long winter nights, in order to hear the fine racy humour with which he related his frequent adventures and battles with excisemen. In the summer evenings, he

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* *Alanna dhas*—my pretty child.

† A kiss of fondness.

usually engaged a piper or fiddler, and had a dance, a contrivance by which he not only rendered himself popular, but increased his business.

In this mode of life, the greatest source of anxiety to Peter and Ellish was the difficulty of not offending their friends by refusing to give them credit. Many plans, were, with great skill and forethought, devised to obviate this evil; but all failed. A short board was first procured, on which they got written with chalk—

"No credit giv'n—barrin' a thrifle to Pether's friends."

Before a week passed, after this intimation, the number of "Pether's friends" increased so rapidly, that neither he nor Ellish knew the half of them. Every scamp in the parish was hand and glove with him: the drinking tribe, particularly, became desperately attached to him and Ellish. Peter was naturally kind-hearted, and found that his firmest resolutions too often gave way before the open flattery with which he was assailed. He then changed his hand, and left Ellish to bear the brunt of their blarney. Whenever any person or persons were seen approaching the house, Peter, if he had reason to suspect an attack upon his indulgence, prepared himself for a retreat. He kept his eye to the window, and if they turned from the direct line of the road, he immediately slipped into bed, and lay close in order to escape them. In the meantime they enter.

"God save all here! Ellish, agra machree, how are you?"

"God save you kindly! Faix, I 'm middlin', I thank you, Condy: how is yourself, an' all at home?"

"Devil a heartier, barrin' my father, that 's touched wid a loss of appetite afther his meals—ha, ha, ha!"

"Musha, the dickens be an you, Condy, but you 're your father's son, any way; the best company in Europe is the same man. Throth, whether you 're jokin' or not, I 'd be sarry to hear of anything to his disadvantage, dacent man. Boys, won't ye go down to the other room?"

"Go way wid yez, boys, till I spake to Ellish here about the affairs o' the nation. Why, Ellish, you stand the cut all to pieces. By the contints o' the book, you do; Pether doesn't stand it half so well. How is he, the thief?"

"Throth, he 's not well to-day, in regard of a smotherin' about the heart he tuck this mornin' afther his breakfast. He jist laid himself on the bed a while, to see if it would go off of him—God be praised for all his marcies!"

"Thin, upon my *sole*vation, I 'm sarry to hear it, and so will all at home, for there 's not in the parish we 're sittin' in a couple that our family has a greater regard an' friendship for, than him an' yourself. Faix, my modher, no longer ago than Friday night last, argued down Bartle Meegan's throath, that you and Biddy Martin war the two portliest weemen that comes into the chapel. God forgive myself, I was near quarrellin' wid Bartle, on the head of it, bekase I tuck my modher's part, as I had good right to do."

"Thrath, I 'm thankful to you both, Condy, for your kindness."

"Oh, the sarra taste o' kindness was in it at all, Ellish, 'twas only the truth; an' as long as I live, I 'll stand up for that."

"Arrah, how is your aunt down at Carntall?"

"Indeed thin but middlin', not gettin' her health: she 'll soon give the crow a puddin', any way; thin, Ellish, you thief, I'm *in* for the yallow boys. Do you know thim that came in wid me?"

"Why thin I can't say I do. Who are they, Condy?"

"Why one o' them's a bachelor to my sisther Norah, a very dacent boy, indeed—him wid the frieze jock upon him, an' the buckskin breeches. The other three's from Teernabraighera beyant. They're related to my brother-in-law, Mick Dillon, by his first wife's brother-in-law's uncle. They're come to this neighbourhood till the 'Sizes, bad luck to them, goes over; for you see, they're in a little throuble."

"The Lord grant them safe out of it, poor boys!"

"I brought them up here to treat them, poor fellows; an', Ellish, avourneen, you must credit me for whatsomever we may have. The thruth is, you see, that when we left home, none of us had any notion of drinkin', or I'd a put somethin' in my pocket, so that I'm taken at an average.—Bud-an'-age! how is little Dan? Sowl, Ellish, that goorsoon, when he grows up, will be a credit to you. I don't think there's a finer child in Europe of his age, so there isn't."

"Indeed, he's a good child, Condy. But, Condy, avick, about givin' credit:—by thim five crasses, if I could give score to any boy in the parish, it 'ud be to yourself. It was only last night that I made a promise against doin' sich a thing for man or mortual. We're a'most broken an' harrish'd out o' house an' home by it; an' what's more, Condy, we intend to give up the business. The landlord's at us every day for his rint, an' we owe for the two last kegs we got, but hasn't a rap to meet aither o' thim; an' enough due to us if we could get it together: an' whisper, Condy, atween ourselves, that's what ails Pether, although he doesn't wish to let an to any one about it."

"Well, but you know I'm safe, Ellish?"

"I know you are, avourneen, as the bank itself; an' should have what you want wid a heart an' a half, only for the promise I made an my two knees last night, aginst givin' credit to man or woman. Why the dickens didn't you come yistherday?"

"Didn't I tell you, woman alive, that it was by accident, an' that I wished to sarve the house, that we came at all. Come, come, Ellish; don't disgrace me afore my sisther's bachelor an' the sthrange boys that's to the fore. By this staff in my hand, I wouldn't for the best cow in our byre be put to the blush afore thim; an' besides, there's a *cleeveenship** atween your family an' ours."

"Condy, avourneen, say no more: if you were fed from the same breast wid me, I couldn't, nor wouldn't break my promise. I wouldn't have the sin of it an me for the wealth o' the three kingdoms."

"Bedad, you're a quare woman; an' only that my regard for you is great entirely, we would be two, Ellish; but I know you're dacent still."

He then left her, and joined his friends in the little room that was

* A kind of indirect relationship.

appropriated for drinking, where, with a great deal of mirth, he related the failure of the plan they had formed for outwitting Peter and Ellish.

"Boys," said he, "she's too many for us! St. Pether himself wouldn't make a hand of her. Faix, she's a cute one. I palavered her at the rate of a hunt, an' she ped me back in my own coin, wid dacent intherest —but no whisky!—Now to take a rise out o' Pether. Jist sit where ye are, till I come back."

He then left them enjoying the intended "spree," and went back to Ellish.

"Well, I'm sure, Ellish, if any one had tuck their book oath that you'd refuse my father's son sich a thrifle, I wouldn't believe them. It's not wid Pether's knowledge you do it, I'll be bound. But bad as you thrated us, sure we must see how the poor fellow is, at any rate."

As he spoke, and before Ellish had time to prevent him, he pressed into the room where Peter lay.

"Why, tare alive, Pether, is it in bed you are, at this hour o' the day?"

"Eh? Who's that—whc's that? oh!"

"Why thin, the sarra lie undher you, is that the way wid you?"

"Oh!—oh! Eh? Is that Condy?"

"All that's to the fore of him. What's asthray wid you, man alive?"

"Throth, Condy, I don't know, rightly. I went out, wantin' my coat, about a week ago, an' got cowld in the small o' the back: I've a pain in it ever since. Be sittin'."

"Is your *heart* safe? You have no smotherin' or anything upon *it?*"

"Why thin, thank goodness, no; it's all about my back an' my hinches."

"Divil a thing it is but a complaint they call an *alloverness* ails you, you shkaimer o' the world wide. 'Tis the oil o' the hazel, or a rubbin' down wid an oak towel you want. Get up, I say, or, by this an' by that, I'll flail you widin an inch o' your life."

"Is it beside yourself you are, Condy?"

"No, no, faix; I've found you out: Ellish is afther tellin' me that it was a smotherin' on the heart; but it's a pain in the small o' the back wid *yourself.* Oh, you born desaver! Get up, I say agin, afore I take the stick to you!"

"Why thin, all sorts o' fortune to you, Condy—ha, ha, ha!—but you're the sarra's pet, for there's no escapin' you. What was that I hard atween you an' Ellish?" said Peter, getting up.

"The sarra matther to you. If you behave yourself, we may let you into the wrong side o' the sacret afore you die. Go an' get us a pint o' what you know," replied Condy, as he and Peter entered the kitchen.

"Ellish," said Peter, "I suppose we must give it to thim. Give it—give it, avourneen. Now, Condy, whin 'ill you pay me for this?"

"Never fret yourself about that; you'll be ped. Honour *bright,* as the black said whin he stole the boots."

"Now, Pether," said the wife, "sure it's no use axin' me to give it, afther the promise I made last night. Give it yourself; for me, I'll have no hand in sich things, good or bad. I hope we'll soon get out of it altogether, for myself's sick an' sore of it, dear knows!"

Peter accordingly furnished them with the liquor, and got a promise that Condy would certainly pay him at mass on the following Sunday, which was only three days distant. The fun of the boys was exuberant at Condy's success: they drank, and laughed, and sang, until pint after pint followed in rapid succession.

Every additional inroad upon the keg brought a fresh groan from Ellish; and even Peter himself began to look blank as their potations deepened. When the night was far advanced they departed, after having first overwhelmed Ellish with professions of the warmest friendship, promising that in future she exclusively should reap whatever benefit was to be derived from their patronage.

In the meantime Condy forgot to perform his promise. The next Sunday passed, but Peter was not paid, nor was his clever debtor seen at mass, or in the vicinity of the shebeen-house, for many a month afterwards—an instance of ingratitude which mortified his creditor extremely. The latter, who felt that it was a *take in,* resolved to cut short all hopes of obtaining credit from them in future. In about a week after the foregoing hoax, he got up a board, presenting a more vigorous refusal of *score* than the former. His friends, who were more in number than he could possibly have imagined, on this occasion, were altogether wiped out of the exception. The notice ran to the following effect:—

"Notice to the Public, *and to Pether Connell's friends in particlar.*—Divil resave the morsel of credit will be got or given in this house, while there is stick or stone of it together, barrin' them that axes it has the *ready money.*

"Pether X his mark Connell,
"Ellish X her mark Connell."

This regulation, considering everything, was a very proper one. It occasioned much mirth among Peter's customers; but Peter cared little about that, provided he made the money.

The progress of his prosperity, dating it from so small a beginning, was certainly slow. He owed it principally to the careful habits of Ellish, and his own sobriety. He was prudent enough to avoid placing any sign in his window, by which his house could be known as a *shebeen;* for he was not ignorant that there is no class of men more learned in this species of hieroglyphics than excisemen. At all events, he was prepared for them, had they come to examine his premises. Nothing that could bring him within the law was ever kept visible. The cask that contained the poteen was seldom a week in the same place of concealment, which was mostly, as we have said, under ground. The tobacco was weighed and subdivided into small quantities, which, in addition to what he carried in his pocket, were distributed in various crevices and crannies of the house; sometimes under the thatch; sometimes under a dish on the dresser, but generally in a damp place.

When they had been about two or three years thus employed, Peter, at the solicitation of the wife, took a small farm.

"You're stout an' able," said she; "an' as I can manage the house widout you, wouldn't it be a good plan to take a bit o' ground—nine or ten acres, suppose—an' thry your hand at it? Sure you wor wanst the greatest man in the parish about a farm. Surely that 'ud be dacenter nor

to be *slungein'* about, invintin' truth and lies for other people, whin they're at their work, to make thim laugh, an' you doin' nothin' but standin' over thim, wid your hands down to the bottom o' your pockets? Do, Pether, thry it, avick, an' you'll see it 'ill prosper wid us, plase God."

"Faix I'm ladin' an asier life, Ellish."

"But are you ladin' a dacenter or a more becominer life?"

"Why I think, widout doubt, that it's more becominer to walk about like a gintleman, nor to be workin' like a slave."

"Gintleman! Musha, is it to the fair you're bringin' yourself? Why, you great big bosthoon, isn't it both a sin an' a shame to see you sailin' about among the neighbours, like a shtray turkey, widout a hand's turn to do? But, any way, take my advice, a villish,—will you, aroon?—an' faix you'll see how rich we'll get, wid a blessin'?"

"Ellish, you're a deludher!"

"Well, an' what suppose? To be sure I am. Usen't you be followin' me, like a calf afther the finger?—ha, ha, ha!—Will you do my biddin', Pether darlin'?"

Peter gave her a shrewd, significant wink, in contradiction to what he considered the degrading comparison she had just made.

"Ellish, you're beside the mark, you beauty; always put the saddle on the right horse, woman alive! Didn't you often an' often swear to me, upon two green ribbons acrass one another, that you liked a red head best, an' that the redder it was you liked it the betther?"

"An' it was thruth, too; an' sure, by the same a token, where could I get one half so red as your own? Faix, I knew what I was about! I wouldn't give you yet for e'er a young man in the parish, if I was a widow to-morrow. Will you take the land?"

"So thin, afther all, if the head hadn't been an me, I wouldn't be a favourite wid you?—ha, ha, ha!"

"Get out wid you, an' spake sinse. Throth if you don't say aither ay or no, I'll give myself no more bother about it. There we are now wid some guineas together, an'——Faix, Pether, you're vexin' me!"

"Do you want an answer?"

"Why, if it's plasin' to *your honour*, I'd have no objection."

"Well, will you have my new big coat made agin *Shraft?*" *

"Ay will I, in case you do what I say; but if you don't, the sarra stitch of it 'll go to your back this twelvemonth, maybe, if you vex me. Now!"

"Well, I'll tell you what: my mind's made up—I *will* take the land; an' I'll show the neighbours what Pether Connell can do yit."

"Augh! augh! mavourneen, that you wor! Throth I'll fry a bit o' the bacon for our dinner to-day, on the head o' that, although I didn't intind to touch it till Sunday. Ay, faix, an' a pair o' stockins, too, along wid the coat; an' somethin' else, that you didn't hear of yit."

Ellish, in fact, was a perfect mistress of the science of wheedling; but as it appears instinctive in the sex, this is not to be wondered at. Peter

* Shrovetide.

himself was easy, or rather indolent, till properly excited by the influence of adequate motives; but no sooner were the energies that slumbered in him called into activity, than he displayed a firmness of purpose, and a perseverance in action, that amply repaid his exertions.

The first thing he did, after taking his little farm, was to prepare for its proper cultivation, and to stock it. His funds were not, however, sufficient for this at the time. A horse was to be bought, but the last guinea they could spare had been already expended, and this purchase was, therefore, out of the question. The usages of the small farmers, however, enabled him to remedy this inconvenience. Peter made a bargain with a neighbour, in which he undertook to repay him by an exchange of labour, for the use of his plough and horses in getting down his crop. He engaged to give him, for a stated period in the slack season, so many days' mowing as would cover the expenses of ploughing and harrowing his land. There was, however, a considerable portion of his holding potato-ground: this Peter himself dug with his spade, breaking it as he went along into fine mould. He then planted the seed—got a hatchet, and selecting the best thorn-bush he could find, cut it down, tied a rope to the trunk, seized the rope, and in this manner harrowed his potato-ground. Thus did he proceed, struggling to overcome difficulties by skill, and substituting for the more efficient modes of husbandry, such rude artificial resources as his want of capital compelled him to adopt.

In the meantime, Ellish, seeing Peter acquitting himself in his undertaking with such credit, determined not to be outdone in her own department. She accordingly conceived the design of extending her business, and widening the sphere of her exertions. This intention, however, she kept secret from Peter, until by putting penny to penny, and shilling to shilling, she was able to purchase a load of crockery. Here was a new source of profit opened exclusively by her own address. Peter was astonished when he saw the car unloaded, and the crockery piled in proud array by Ellish's own hands.

"I knew," said she, "I'd take a start out o' you. Faix, Pether, you'll see how I'll do, never fear, wid the help o' Heaven! I'll be off to the market in the mornin', plase God, where I'll sell rings round me * o' them crocks and pitchers. An' now, Pether, the sarra one o' me would do this, good or bad, only bekase your managin' the farm so cleverly. Tady Gormley's goin' to bring home his meal from the mill, and has promised to lave these in the market for me, an' never fear but I'll get some o' the neighbours to bring them home, so that there's car-hire saved. Faix, Pether, there's nothin' like givin' the people sweet words, any way; sure they come chape."

"Faith, an' I'll back you for the sweet words agin any woman in the three kingdoms, Ellish, you darlin'. But don't you know the proverb, 'sweet words butther no parsnips.'"

"In throth the same proverb's a lyin' one, and ever was; but it's not parsnips I'll butther wid 'em, you gommoch."

"Sowl, you butthered me wid 'em long enough, you deludher—devil a

* This is a kind of hyperbole for selling a great quantity.

lie in it; but thin, as you say, sure enough, I was no parsnip—not so soft as that either, you phanix."

"No? Thin I seldom seen your beautiful head without thinkin' of a carrot, an' it's well known they're related—ha, ha, ha!—Behave, Pether—behave, I say—Pether, Pether—ha, ha, ha!—let me alone! Katty Hacket, take him away from me—ha, ha, ha!"

"Will ever you, you shaver wid the tongue that you are? Will ever you, I say? Will ever you make delusion to my head again—eh?"

"Oh, never, never—but let me go, an' me so full o' ticles! Oh, Pether, avourneen, don't, you 'll hurt me, an' the way I'm in—quit, avillish!"

"Bedad, if you don't let my head alone, I'll—will ever you?"

"Never, never, There now—ha, ha, ha!—oh, but I'm as wake as wather wid what I laughed. Well now, Pether, didn't I manage bravely—didn't I?"

"Wait till we see the profits first, Ellish—crockery's very tindher goods."

"Ay!—just wait, an' I 'll engage, I 'll turn the penny, The family 's risin' wid us"—

"Very thrue," replied Peter, giving a sly wink at the wife—"no doubt of it."

"— Risin' wid us—I tell you to have sinse, Pether; an' it's our duty to have something for the crathurs when they grow up."

"Well, that's a thruth—sure I'm not sayin' against it."

"I know that; but what I say is, if we hould an, we may make money. Every thing, for so far, has thruv wid us, God be praised for it. There's another thing in my mind, that I'll be tellin' you some o' these days."

"I believe, Ellish, you dhrame about makin' money."

"Well, an' I might do worse; when I 'm dhramin' about it, I 'm doin' no sin to any one. But, listen, you must keep the house to-morrow while I 'm at the market. Won't you, Pether?"

"An' who 's to open the dhrain in the bottom below?"

"That can be done the day afther. Won't you, abouchal?"

"Ellish, you 're a deludher, I tell you. Sweet words;—sowl, you'd smooth a furze bush wid sweet words. How-an-ever, I *will* keep the house to-morrow, till we see the great things you 'll do wid your crockery."

Ellish's success was, to say the least of it, quite equal to her expectations. She was certainly an excellent wife, full of acuteness, industry, and enterprise. Had Peter been married to a woman of a disposition resembling his own, it is probable that he would have sunk into indolence, filth, and poverty. These miseries might have soured their tempers, and driven them into all the low excesses and crimes attendant upon pauperism. Ellish, however, had sufficient spirit to act upon Peter's natural indolence, so as to excite it to the proper pitch. Her mode of operation was judiciously suited to his temper. Playfulness and kindness were the instruments by which she managed him. She knew that violence, or the assumption of authority, would cause a man who, like him, was stern when provoked, to re-act, and meet her with an assertion of his rights and authority not to be trifled with. This she consequently

avoided, not entirely from any train of reasoning on the subject; but from that intuitive penetration which taught her to know that the plan she had resorted to was best calculated to make him subservient to her own purposes without causing him to feel that he was governed.

Indeed, every day brought out her natural cleverness more clearly. Her intercourse with the world afforded her that facility of understanding the tempers and dispositions of others, which can never be acquired when it has not been bestowed as a natural gift. In her hands it was a valuable one. By degrees her house improved in its appearance, both inside and outside. From crockery she proceeded to herrings, then to salt, in each of which she dealt with surprising success. There was, too, such an air of bustle, activity, and good-humour about her that people loved to deal with her. Her appearance was striking, if not grotesque. She was tall and strong, walked rapidly, and when engaged in fair or market disposing of her coarse merchandise, was dressed in a short red petticoat, blue stockings, strong brogues, wore a blue cloak, with the hood turned up over her head, on the top of which was a man's hat fastened by a ribbon under her chin. As she thus stirred about, with a kind word and a joke for every one, her healthy cheek in full bloom, and her blue-grey eye beaming with an expression of fun and good-nature, it would be difficult to conceive a character more adapted for intercourse with a laughter-loving people. In fact, she soon became a favourite, and this not the less that she was as ready to meet her rivals in business with a blow as with a joke. Peter witnessed her success with unfeigned pleasure; and although every feasible speculation was proposed by her, yet he never felt that he was a mere nonentity when compared to his wife. 'Tis true, he was perfectly capable of executing her agricultural plans when she proposed them, but his own capacity for making a lucky hit was very limited. Of the two she was certainly the better farmer; and scarcely an improvement took place in his little holding, which might not be traced to Ellish.

In the course of a couple of years she bought him a horse, and Peter was enabled to join with a neighbour who had another. Each had a plough and tackle, so that here was a little team made up, the half of which belonged to Peter. By this means they ploughed week about, until their crops were got down. Peter finding his farm doing well, began to feel a kind of rivalship with his wife—that is to say, she first suggested the principle, and afterwards contrived to make him imagine that it was originally his own.

"The sarra one o' you, Pether," she exclaimed to him one day, "but's batin' me out an' out. Why, you're the very dickins at the farmin', so you are. Faix, I suppose, if you go an this way much longer, that you 'll be thinkin' of another farm, in regard that we have some guineas together. Pether, did you ever think of it, abouchal?"

"To be sure, I did, you beauty; an' amn't I in fifty notions to take Harry Neal's land, that jist lies alongside of our own."

"Faix, an' you 're right, maybe; but if it 's sthrivin' agin me you are, you may give it over: I tell you, I'll have more money made afore this time twelvemonth than you will."

"Arrah, is it jokin' you are? More money? Would you advise me to take Harry's land? Tell me *that* first, you phanix, an' thin I'm your man!"

"Faix, take your own coorse, avourneen. If you get a lase of it at a fair rint, I'll buy another horse, any how. Isn't that doin' the thing dacent?"

"More power to you, Ellish! I'll hold you a crown, I pay you the price o' the horse afore this time twelvemonth."

"Done! The sarra be off me but done!—an' here's Barny Dillon an' Katty Hacket to bear witness."

"Sure enough we will," said Barny, the servant.

"I'll back the misthress any money," replied the maid.

"Two to one on the masther," said the man. "Whoo! our side o' the house for ever! Come, Pether, hould up your head, there's money bid for you!"

"Ellish, I'll fight for you ancle deep," said Katty—"depind your life an me."

"In the name o' goodness, thin, it's a bargain," said Ellish; "an' at the end o' the year, if we're spared, we'll see what we'll see. We'll have among ourselves a little sup o' tay, plase goodness, an' we'll be comfortable. Now, Barny, go an' draw home thim phaties from the pits while the day's fine; and Katty, a colleen, bring in some wather, till we get the pig killed and scalded—it'll hardly have time to be good bacon for the big markets at Christmas. I don't wish," she continued, "to keep it back from them that we have a thrifle o' money, One always does betther when it's known that they're not strugglin'. There's Nelly Cummins, an' her customers is lavin' her, an' dalin' wid me, bekase she's goin' down in business. Ay, an', Pether, a hagur, it's the way o' the world."

"Well but, Ellish, don't you be givin' Nelly Cummins the harsh word, or lanin' too heavily upon her, the crathur, merely in regard that she *is* goin' down. Do you hear, a colleen?"

"Indeed I don't do it, Pether; but you know she has a tongue like a razor at times, and whin it gets loose she'd provoke St. Pether himself. Thin she's takin' to the dhrink, too, the poor misfortunate vagabone!"

"Well, well, that's no affair o' yours, or mine aither—only don't be risin' ructions and norrations wid her. You *threwn* a jug at her the last day you war out, an' hot the poor ould Potticary as he was passin'. You see I hard that, though you kept it close from me!—ha, ha, ha!"

"Ha, ha, ha!—why you'd split if you had seen the crathur whin he fell into Pether White's brogue-creels, wid his heels up. But what right had she to be shrivin' to bring away my customers afore my face? Ailey Dogherty was buying a crock wid me, and Nelly shouts over to her from where she sot like a prince on her stool, 'Ailey,' says she, 'here's a betther one for three fardens less, an' another farden 'ill get you a pennorth o' salt.' An', indeed, Ailey walks over, manely enough, an' tuck her at her word. Why, flesh an' blood couldn't bear it."

"Indeed, an' you're raal flesh an' blood, Ellish, if that's thrue."

"Well, but consarnin' what I mintioned awhile agone—hut! the poor mad crathur, let us have no more discoorse about her—I say, that no one ever thrives so well as when the world sees that they are gettin' an, an'

prosperin'; but if there's not an appearance, how will any one know whether we are prosperin' or not, barrin' they see some sign of it about us; I mane, in a quiet rasonable way, widout show or extravagance. In the name o' goodness, thin, let us get the house brushed up, an' the outhouses dashed. A bushel or two of lime 'ill make this as white as an egg widin, an' a very small expinse will get it plastered and whitewashed widout. Wouldn't you like it, avoureen? Eh, Pether?"

"To be sure I'd like it. It 'll give a respectful look to the house and place."

"Ay, an' it 'll bring customers, that's the main thing. People always like to come to a snug comfortable place. An', plase God, I'm thinking of another plan that I'll soon mintion."

"An' what may that be, you skamer? Why, Ellish, you've ever an' always some skame or other in that head o' yours. For my part, I don't know how you get at them."

"Well, no matter, acushla, do you only back me; jist show me how I ought to go on wid them, for nobody can outdo you at such things, an' I'll engage we'll thrive yit, always wid a blessin' an us."

"Why, to tell God's thruth, I'd bate the devil himself at plannin' out, an' bringin' a thing to a conclusion—eh, you deludher?"

"The sarra doubt of it; but takin' the other farm was the brightest thought I seen wid you yit. Will you do it, avillish?"

"To be sure, Don't I say it? An' it 'll be up wid the lark wid me. Hut, woman, you don't see the half o' that's in me, yet."

"I'll buy you a hat and a pair o' stockins at Christmas."

"Will you, Ellish? Then, by the book, I'll work like a horse."

"I didn't intind to tell you, but I had it laid out for you."

"Faith, you're a beauty, Ellish. What 'll we call this young chap that's comin', acushla?"

"Now, Pether, none o' your capers. It's time enough when the thing happens to be thinkin' o' that, glory be to God!"

"Well, you may talk as you plase, but I'll call him Pether."

"An' how do you know but he'll be a girl, you omadhawn?"

"Murdher alive, ay, sure enough! Faith I didn't think o' that!"

"Well, go up now an' spake to Misther Eccles about the land; maybe somebody else 'ud slip in afore us, an' that wouldn't be pleasant. Here's your brave big coat, put it an; faix, it makes a man of you—gives you a *bodagh** look entirely: but that's little to what you'll be yet, wid a blessin'—a Half Sir, any way."

In fact, Ellish's industry had already gained a character for both herself and her husband. He got credit for the assiduity and activity to which she trained him: and both were respected for their cleverness in advancing themselves from so poor a beginning, to the humble state of

* This word is used in Ireland sometimes in a good and sometimes in a bad sense. For instance, the peasantry will often say in allusion to some individual who may happen to be talked of, "Hut! he's a dirty *bodagh*;" but again, you may hear them use it in a sense directly the reverse of this; for instance, "He 's a very dacent man, and looks the *bodagh* entirely." As to the "Half Sir," he stands about half-way between the *bodagh* and the gentleman. *Bodagh*—signifying churl—was applied originally as a term of reproach to the English settlers.

independence they had then reached. The farm which Ellish was so anxious to secure was the property of the gentleman from whom they held the other. Being a man of sense and penetration, he fortunately saw—what, indeed, was generally well known—that Peter and Ellish were rising in the world, and that their elevation was the consequence of their own unceasing efforts to become independent, so that industry is in every possible point of view its own reward. So long as the farm was open to competition, the offers for it multiplied prodigiously, and rose in equal proportion. Persons not worth twenty shillings in the world, offered double the rent which the utmost stretch of ingenuity, even with suitable capital, could pay. New-married couples, with nothing but the strong imaginative hopes peculiar to their country, proposed for it in a most liberal spirit. Men who had been ejected out of their late farms for non-payment of rent, were ready to cultivate this at a rent much above that which, on better land, they were unable to pay. Others, who had been ejected from farm after farm—each of which they undertook as a mere speculation, to furnish them with present subsistence, but without any ultimate expectation of being able to meet their engagements—came forward with the most laudable efforts. This gentleman, however, was none of those landlords who are so besotted and ignorant of their own interests, as to let their lands simply to the highest bidders, without taking into consideration their capital, moral character, and habits of industry. He resided at home, knew his tenants personally, took an interest in their successes and difficulties, and instructed them in the best modes of improving their farms.

Peter's firsti nterview with him was not quite satisfactory on either side. The honest man was like a ship without her rudder, when transacting business in the absence of his wife. The fact was, that on seeing the high proposals which were sent in, he became alarmed lest, as he flattered himself, that the credit of the transaction should be all his own, the farm might go into the hands of another, and his character for cleverness suffer with Ellish. The landlord was somewhat astounded at the rent which a man who bore so high a name for prudence offered him. He knew it was considerably beyond what the land was worth, and he did not wish that any tenant coming upon his estate should have no other prospect than that of gradually receding into insolvency.

"I cannot give you any answer now," said he to Peter; "but if you will call in a day or two I shall let you know my final determination."

Peter, on coming home, rendered an account of his interview with the landlord to his wife, who no sooner heard of the extravagant proposal he made, than she raised her hands and eyes, exclaiming—

"Why thin, Pether, a lanna, was it beside yourself you wor, to go for to offer a rint that no one could honestly pay! Why, man alive, it 'ud lave us widout house or home in no time, all out! Sure Pether, a cushla, where 'ud be the use of us or any one takin' land, barrin' they could make somethin' by it? Faix, if the gintleman had sinse, he wouldn't give the same farm to anybody at sich a rint; an' for good rasons too—bekase they could never pay it, an himself 'ud be the sufferer in the long run."

"Dang me, but you're the long-headedest woman alive this day,

Ellish. Why, I never wanst wint into the rason o' the thing, at all. But you don't know the offers he got."

"Don't I? Why do you think he'd let the Mullins, or the Conlans, or the O'Donoghoes, or the Duffys, upon his land, widout a shillin' in one o' their pockets to stock it, or to begin workin' it properly wid. Hand me my cloak from the pin there, an' get your hat. Katty, avourneen, have an eye to the house till we come back; an' if Dick Murphy comes here to get tobaccy on score, tell him I can't afford it, till he pays up what he got. Come, Pether, in the name o' goodness—come, a bouchal."

Ellish, during their short journey to the landlord's, commenced, in her own way, a lecture upon agricultural economy, which, though plain and unvarnished, contained excellent and practical sense. She also pointed out to him when to speak and when to be silent; told him what rent to offer, and in what manner he should offer it; but she did all this so dexterously and sweetly, that honest Peter thought the new and corrected views which she furnished him with, were altogether the result of his own penetration.

The landlord was at home when they arrived, and ordered them into the parlour, where he soon made his appearance.

"Well, Connell," said he, smiling, "are you come to make me a *higher* offer?"

"Why thin no, plase your honour," replied Peter, looking for confidence to Ellish: "instead o' that, sir, Ellish here"——

"Never heed me, a lanna; tell his honour what you've to say, out o' the face. Go an, acushla."

"Why, your honour, to tell the blessed thruth, the dickens a bit o' myself but had a sup in my head when I wid your honour to-day before."

Ellish was thunderstruck at this most unexpected apology from Peter; but the fact was, that the instructions which she had given him on their way had completely evaporated from his brain, and he felt himself thrown altogether upon his own powers of invention. Here, however, he was at home; for it was well known among all his acquaintances, that, however he might be deficient in the management of a family when compared to his wife, he was capable, notwithstanding, of exerting a certain imaginative faculty in a very high degree. Ellish felt that to contradict him on the spot must lessen both him and herself in the opinion of the landlord, a circumstance that would have given her much pain.

"I'm sorry to hear that, Connell," said Mr. Eccles; "you bear the character of being strictly sober in your habits. You must have been early at the bottle, too, which makes your apology rather unhappy. Of all tipplers, he who drinks early is the worst and most incurable."

"Thrue for you, sir, but this only happens me wanst a year, your honour."

"Once a year! But, by the by, you had no appearance of being tipsy, Peter."

"Tipsy! Bud-a'-age, your honour, I was never seen tipsy in all my life," said Peter.—"That's a horse of another colour, sir, plase your honour."

The reader must at once perceive that Peter here was only recovering himself from the effects of the injurious impression which his first admission was calculated to produce against him in the mind of his landlord.

"Tipsy! No, no, sir; but the rason of it, sir, was this: it bein' my birthday, sir, I merely tuck a sup in the mornin', in honour o' the day. It's altogether a lucky day to me, sir!"

"Why, to be sure, every man's birthday may, probably, be called such—the gift of existence being, I fear, too much undervalued."

"Bedad, your honour, I don't mane that, at all."

"Then what *do* you mean, Peter?"

"Why, sir, you see, it's not that I was *entirely* born on this day, but *partly*, sir; I was marrid to Ellish here into the bargain,—one o' the best wives, sir—however, I'll say no more, as she's to the fore herself. But, death alive, sir, sure when we put both conclusions together—myself bein' sich a worthy man, and Ellish such a tip-top wife, who could blame me for smellin' the bottle?—for divil a much more I did—about two glasses, sir—an' so it got up into my head a little when I was wid your honour to-day before."

"But what is the amount of all this, Peter?"

"Why, sir, you see only I was as I said, sir—not tipsy, your honour, any way, but seein' things double or so; an' that was, I suppose, what made me offer for the farm double what I intinded. Every body knows, sir, that the 'crathur' gives the big heart to us, any how, your honour."

"But you know, Peter, we entered into no terms about it. I, therefore, have neither power nor inclination to hold you to the offer you made."

"Faith, sir, you're not the gintleman to do a shabby turn, nor ever was, nor one o' your family. There's not in all Europe"—

Ellish, who was a point blank dealer, could endure Peter's mode of transacting business no longer. She knew that if he once got into the true spirit of applying the oil of flattery to the landlord, he would have rubbed him into a perfect froth ere he quitted him. She, therefore, took up the thread of the discourse, and finished the compliment with much more delicacy than honest Peter could have displayed.

"Thrue for you, Pether," she added; "there is not a kinder family to the poor, nor betther landlords, in the country they live in. Pether an' myself, your honour, on layin' both our heads together, found that he offered more rint for the land nor any tenant could honestly pay. So, sir, where's the use of keepin' back God's thruth—Pether, sir"—

Peter here trembled from an apprehension that the wife, in accomplishing some object of her own in reference to the land, was about to undeceive the landlord, touching the lie which he had so barefacedly palmed upon that worthy gentleman for truth. In fact, his anxiety overcame his prudence, and he resolved to anticipate her.

"I'd advise you, sir," said he, with a smile of significant good-humour, "to be a little suspicious of her, for, to tell the thruth, she draws the"—here he illustrated the simile with his staff—"the long bow of an odd time; faith she does. I'd kiss the book on the head of what I tould you,

sir, plase your honour. For the sacret of it is, that I tuck the moisture afore she left her bed."

"Why, Peter, alanna," said Ellish, soothingly, "what's comin' over you, at all, an' me goin' to explain to his honour the outs and ins of our opinion about the land? Faix, man, we're not thinkin' about you, good or bad."

"I believe the drop has scarcely left your head yet, Peter," said the landlord.

"Bud-an'-age, your honour, sure we must have our joke, any how—doesn't she desarve it for takin' the word out o' my mouth?"

"Whisht, a villish; you're too cute for us all, Pether. There's no use, sir, as I was sayin', for any one to deny that when they take a farm they do it to make by it, or at the laste to live comfortably an it. That's the thruth, your honour, an' it's no use to keep it back from you, sir."

"I perfectly agree with you," said the landlord. "It is with these motives that a tenant should wish to occupy land; and it is the duty of every landlord who has his own interest truly at heart, to see that his land be not let at such a rent as will preclude the possibility of comfort or independence on the part of his tenantry. He who lets his land *above* its value, merely because people are foolish enough to offer more for it than it is worth, is as great an enemy to himself as he is to the tenant."

"It's God's thruth, sir, an' it's nothin' else but a comfort to hear sich words comin' from the lips of a gintleman that's a landlord himself."

"Ay, an' a good one, too," said Peter; "an' kind father for his honour to be what he is. Divil resave the family in all Europe"—

"Thrue for you, avourneen, an' every one knows that. We wor talkin' it over, sir, betuxt ourselves, Pether an' me, an' he says very cutely, that, upon second thoughts, he offered more nor we could honestly pay out o' the land; so"—

"Faith, it's as thrue as gospel, your honour. Says I, 'Ellish, you beauty'"—

"I thought," observed Mr. Eccles, "that she sometimes drew the long bow, Peter."

"Oh, murdher alive, sir, it was only in regard of her crassin' in an' whippin' the word out o' my mouth, that I wanted to take a rise out of her. Oh, bedad, sir, no; the crathur's thruth to the backbone, an' farther if I'd say it."

"So, your honour, considherin' everything, we're willin' to offer thirty shillins an acre for the farm. That rint, sir, we'll be able to pay, wid the help o' God, for sure we can do nothin' widout his assistance, glory be to his name! You'll get many that'll offer you more, your honour; but if it 'ud be plasin' to you to considher what manes they have to pay it, I think, sir, you'd see, out o' your own sinse, that it's not likely people who is gone to the bad, an' has nothin' could stand it out long."

"I wish to heaven," replied Mr. Eccles, "that every tenant in Ireland possessed your prudence and good sense. Will you permit me to ask, Mrs. Connell, what capital you and your husband can command provided I should let you have it."

"Wid every pleasure in life, sir, for it's but a fair question to put.

An' sure, it is to God we owe it, whatever it is, plase your honour. But, sir, if we get the land, we're able to stock it, an' to crop it well an' dacently; an' if your honour would allow us for sartin improvements, sir, we'd run it into snug fields, by plantin' good hedges, an' gettin' up shelther for the outlyin' cattle in the hard seasons, plase your honour, and you know the farm is very naked and bare of shelter at present."

"Sowl, will we, sir, an' far more nor that, if we get it. I'll undhertake, sir, to level"—

"No, Pether, we'll promise no more nor we'll do; but anything that his honour will be plased to point out to us, if we get fair support, an' that it remains on the farm afther us, we'll be willin' to do it."

"Willin'!" exclaimed Peter;—"faith, whether we're willin' or not, if his honour but says the word"——

"Mrs. Connell," said their landlord, "say no more. The farm is yours, and you may consider yourselves as my tenants."

"Many thanks to you, sir, for the priference. I hope, sir, you'll not rue what you did in givin' it to us before them that offered a higher rint. You'll find, sir, wid the help o' the Almighty, that we'll pay you your rint rigular an' punctual."

"Why, thin, long life, an' glory, an' benediction to your honour! Faith it's only kind father for you, sir, to be what you are. The divil resave the family in all Europe"——

"Peter, that will do," replied the landlord; "it would be rather hazardous for our family to compete with all Europe. Go home, Peter, and be guided by your wife, who has more sense in her little finger than ever your family had either in Europe or out of it, although I mean you no offence by going *beyond* Europe."

"By all the books that *n*ever wor opened an' shut," replied Peter, with the intuitive quickness of perception peculiar to Irishmen, "an innocenter boy than Andy Connell never was sent acrass the water. I proved as clear an *alibi* for him as the sun in the firmanent; an' yit, bad luck to the big-wig O'Grady, he should be puttin' in his leek an me afore the jury, jist whin I had the poor boy cleared out dacently, an' wid all honour. An' bedad, now, that we're spakin' about it, I'll tell your honour the whole conclusions of it. You see, sir, the Agint was shot one night; an' above all nights in the year, your honour, a thief of a toothach that I had kep me"——

"Pether, come away, a bouchal: his honour knows as much about it as you do. Come, aroon; you know we must help to scald an' scrape the pig afore night, an' it's late now."

"Bedad, sir, she's a sweet one, this."

"Be guided by her, Peter, if you're wise: she's a wife you ought to be proud of."

"Thrue for you, sir; divil resave the word o' lie in that, any how. Come, Ellish; come, you deludher, I'm wid you."

"God bless your honour, sir, an' we're oblaged to you for your kindness an' patience wid the likes o' us."

"I say ditto, your honour. Long life an' glory to you every day your honour rises!"

Peter, on his way home, entered into a defence of his apology for offering so high a rent to the landlord; but although it possessed both ingenuity and originality, it was, we must confess, grossly defective in those principles usually inculcated by our best Ethic writers.

"Couldn't you have tould him what we agreed upon goin' up," observed Ellish; "but instead o' that, to begin an' tell the gintleman so many lies about your bein' dhrunk, an' this bein' your birth-day, an' the day we wor marrid, an',——Musha, sich quare stories to come into your head!"

"Why," said Peter, "what harm's in all that, whin he didn't *find me out?*"

"But why the sarra did you go to say that *I* was in the custom o' tellin' lies?"

"Faix, bekase I thought you wor goin' to let out all, an' I thought it best to have the first word o' you. What else?—but sure I brought myself off bravely."

"Well, well, a hudh; don't be invitin' sich things another time, or you 'll bring yourself into a scrape, some way or other."

"Faix, an' *you* needn't spake Ellish; you can let out a nate bounce yourself, whin it's to sarve you. Come now, don't run away wid the story!"

"Well, if I do, it's in the way o' my business; whin I'm batin' thim down in the price o' what I'm buyin', or gettin' thim to bid up for any thing I'm sellin': besides, it's to advance ourselves in the world, that I do it, a bouchal."

"Go an, go an; faix, you 're like the new moon, sharp at both corners: but what matther, you beauty, we 've secured the farm, at any rate, an', by this an' by that, I 'll show you tip-top farmin' an it."

A struggle now commenced between the husband and wife, as to which of them should, in their respective departments, advance themselves with greater rapidity in life. This friendly contest was kept up principally by the address of Ellish, who, as she knew those points in her husband's character most easily wrought upon, felt little difficulty in shaping him to her own purposes. Her great object was to acquire wealth; and it mostly happens, that when this is the ruling principle in life, there is usually to be found, in association with it, all those qualities which are best adapted to secure it. Peter, on finding that every succeeding day brought something to their gains, began to imbibe a portion of that spirit which wholly absorbed Ellish. He became worldly; but it was rather the worldliness of habit than of principle. In the case of Ellish, it proceeded from both; her mind was apt, vigorous, and conceptive; her body active, her manners bland and insinuating, and her penetration almost intuitive. About the time of their entering upon the second farm, four children had been the fruit of their marriage—two sons and two daughters. These were now new sources of anxiety to their mother, and fresh impulses to her industry. Her ignorance, and that of her husband, of any kind of education, she had often, in the course of their business, bitter cause to regret. She now resolved that their children should be well instructed; and no time was lost in sending them to school, the

moment she thought them capable of imbibing the simplest elements of instruction.

"It's hard to say," she observed to her husband, "how soon they may be useful to us. Who knows, Pether, but we may have a full shop yit, an' they may be able to make up bits of accounts for us, poor things? Throth, I'd be happy if I wanst seen it."

"Faix, Ellish," replied Peter, "if we can get an as we're doin', it *is* hard to say. For my own part, if I had got the larnin' in time, I might be a bright boy to-day, no doubt of it—could spake up to the best o' thim. I never wint to school but wanst, an' I remimber I threwn the masther into a kiln-pot, an' broke the poor craythur's arm; an' from that day to this, I never could be brought a single day to school."

Peter and Ellish now began to be pointed out as a couple worthy of imitation by those who knew that perseverance and industry never fail of securing their own reward. Others, however,—that is to say, the lazy, the profligate, and the ignorant,—had a ready solution for the secret of their success.

"Oh, my dear, she 's a *lucky* woman, an' anything she puts her hand to prospers. Sure she was born wid a *lucky caul* * an her head; an', be sure, a hagur, the world will flow in upon thim. There's many a neighbour about thim works their fingers to the stumps, an' yit you see they can't get an: for Ellish, if she'd throw the sweepins of her hearth to the wind, it 'ud come back to her in money. *She was born to it, an' nothin' can keep her from her luck!*"†

Such are many of the senseless theories that militate against exertion and industry in Ireland, and occasion many to shrink back from the laudable race of honest enterprise, into filth, penury, and crime. It is this idle and envious crew, who, with a natural aversion to domestic industry, become adepts in politics, and active in those illegal combinations and outrages which retard the prosperity of the country, and bring disgrace upon the great body of its peaceable inhabitants.

In the meantime Ellish was rapidly advancing in life, while such

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* The caul is a thin membrane, about the consistence of very fine silk, which sometimes covers the head of a new-born infant like a cap. It is always the omen of great good fortune to the infant and parents; and in Ireland, when any one has unexpectedly fallen into the receipt of property, or any other temporal good, it is customary to say, "such a person was born with a 'lucky caul' on his head."

Why these are considered lucky, it would be a very difficult matter to ascertain. Several instances of good fortune, happening to such as were born with them, might by their coincidences, form a basis for the superstition; just as the fact of three men during one severe winter having been found drowned, each with two shirts on, generated an opinion which has now become fixed and general in that parish, that it is unlucky to wear two shirts at once. We are not certain whether the caul is in general the perquisite of the midwife—sometimes we believe it is; at all events, her integrity occasionally yields to the desire of possessing it. In many cases she conceals its existence, in order that she may secretly dispose of it to good advantage, which she frequently does; for it is considered to be the herald of good fortune to those who can get it into their possession. Now, let not our English neighbours smile at us for those things until they wash their own hands clear of such practices. At this day a caul will bring a good price in the most civilised city in the world—to wit, the good city of London—the British metropolis. Nay, to such lengths has the mania for cauls been carried there, that they have been actually advertised for in the *Times* newspaper.

† This doctrine of fatalism is very prevalent among the lower orders in Ireland.

persons were absurdly speculating upon the cause of her success. Her business was not only increased, but extended. From crockery, herrings, and salt, she advanced gradually to deal in other branches adapted to her station, and the wants of the people. She bought stockings, and retailed them every market-day. By and by a few pieces of soap might be seen in her windows: starch, blue, potash, and candles, were equally profitable. Pipes were seen stuck across each other, flanked by tape, cakes, children's books, thimbles, and bread. In fact, she was equally clever and expert in whatever she undertook. The consciousness of this, and her reputation as being "a hard honest woman," encouraged her to get a cask or two of beer, and a few rolls of tobacco. Peter, when she proposed the two last, consented only to sell them still as smuggled goods—*sub silentio.* With her usual prudence, however, she declined this.

"We have gone on that way purty far," she replied, "an' never *got a touch*,* thanks to the kindness o' the neighbours that never informed an us; but now, Pether, that we're *able*, we had betther do everything above boord. You know the ould say, 'long runs the fox, but he's catched at last;' so let us give up in time, an' get out a little bit o' licence."

"I don't like that at all," replied Peter; "I can't warm my heart to the licence. I'll back you in anything but that. The gauger won't come next or near us: he has thried it often, an' never made anything of it. Dang me, but I'd like to have a bit o' fun with the gauger, to see if my hand's still ready for practice."

"Oh, thin, Pether, how can you talk that way, asthore? Now if what I'm sayin' was left to yourself wouldn't you be apt to plan it as I'm doin'?—wouldn't you, acushla? Throth, I know you're too cute an' sinsible not to do it."

"Why thin, do you know what, Ellish—although I didn't spake out, upon my faix I was thinkin' of it. Divil a word o' lie in it."

"Oh, you thief o' the world, an' never to tell it to me. Faix, Pether, you're a cunnin' shaver, an' as deep as a draw well."

"Let me alone. Why I tell you if I study an' lay myself down to it, I can conthrive anything. Whin I was young, many a time my poor father, God be good to him! said that if there was any possibility of gettin' me to take to larnin', I'd be risin' out o' the ashes every mornin' like a phanix."

"But won't you hould to your plan about the licence?"

"Hould! To be sure I will. What was I but takin' a rise out o' you. I intinded it this good while, you phanix—faix, I did."

In this manner did Ellish dupe her own husband into increasing wealth. Their business soon became so extensive, that a larger house was absolutely necessary. To leave that, beneath whose roof she succeeded so well in all her speculations, was a point—be it of prudence or of prejudice—which Ellish could not overcome. Her maxim was, wherever you find yourself doing well, stay there. She contrived, however, to remedy this. To the old house additional apartments were, from time to time, added, into which their business soon extended. When these again be-

* Never suffered by the exciseman.

came too small, others were also built; so that in the course of about twenty years, their premises were so extensive, that the original shebeen-house constituted a very small portion of Peter's residence. Peter, during Ellish's progress within doors, had not been idle without. For every new room added to the house, he was able to hook in a fresh farm in addition to those he had already occupied. Unexpected success had fixed his heart as strongly upon the accumulation of money, and the pride of rising in the world, as it was possible for a man, to whom they were only adventitious feelings, to experience. The points of view in which he and his wife were contemplated by the little public about them were peculiar, but clearly distinct. The wife was generally esteemed for her talents and incessant application to business; but she was not so cordially liked as Peter. He, on the other hand, though less esteemed, was more beloved by all their acquaintances than Ellish. This might probably originate from the more obvious congeniality which existed between Peter's natural disposition, and the national character; for with the latter, Ellish, except good humour, had little in common.

The usual remarks upon both were—"she would buy an' sell him"—"'twas she that made a man of him; but for all that, Pether's worth a ship-load of her, if she'd give him his own way." That is, if she would permit him to drink with the neighbours, to be idle and extravagant.

Every year, now that their capital was extending, added more perceptibly to their independence. Ellish's experience in the humbler kinds of business, trained her for a higher line; just as boys at school rise from one form to another. She made no plunges, nor permitted Peter, who was often inclined to jump at conclusions, to make any. Her elevation was gradual and cautious; for her plans were always so seasonable and simple, that every new description of business, and every new success, seemed to arise naturally from that which went before it.

Having once taken out a license, their house soon became a decent country spirit establishment; from soap, and candles, and tobacco, she rose into the full sweep of groceries; and from dealing in Connemara stockings and tape, she proceeded in due time to sell woollen and linen drapery. Her crockery was now metamorphosed into delf, pottery, and hardware; her gingerbread into stout loaves, for as Peter himself grew wheat largely, she seized the opportunity presented by the death of the only good baker in the neighbourhood, of opening an extensive bakery.

It may be asked, how two illiterate persons, like Peter and Ellish, could conduct business in which so much calculation was necessary, without suffering severely by their liability to make mistakes. To this we reply—first, that we should have liked to see any person attempting to pass a bad note or a light guinea upon Ellish after nine or ten years' experience; we should like to have seen a smug clerk taking his pen from behind his ear, and after making his calculation, on inquiring from Ellish if she had reckoned up the amount, compelled to ascertain the error which she pointed out to him. The most remarkable point in her whole character, was the rapid accuracy she displayed in mental calculation, and her uncommon sagacity in detecting bad money.

There is, however, a still more satisfactory explanation of this circum-

stance to be given. She had not neglected the education of her children. The eldest was now an intelligent boy, and a smart accountant, who, thanks to his master, had been taught to keep their books by Double Entry. The second was little inferior to him as a clerk, though as a general dealer he was far his superior. The eldest had been principally behind the counter; whilst the younger, in accompanying his mother in all her transactions and bargain-making, had in a great measure imbibed her address and tact.

It is certainly a pleasing, and, we think, an interesting thing, to contemplate the enterprise of an humble, but active, shrewd woman, enabling her to rise, step by step, from the lowest state of poverty to a small sense of independence; from this, by calling fresh powers into action, taking wider views, and following them up by increased efforts, until her shebeen becomes a small country public-house; until her roll of tobacco, and her few pounds of soap and starch, are lost in the well-filled drawers of a grocery shop; and her grey Connemara stockings transformed by the golden wand of industry, into a country cloth warehouse. To see Peter —from the time when he first harrowed part of his farm with a thorn-bush, and ploughed it by joining his horse to that of a neighbour—adding farm to farm, horse to horse, and cart to cart, until we find him a wealthy and extensive agriculturist.

The progress of Peter and Ellish was in another point of view a good study for him who wishes to look into human nature, whilst adapting itself to the circumstances through which it passes. When this couple began life, their friends and acquaintances were as poor as themselves; as they advanced from one gradation to another, and rose up from a lower to a higher state, their former friends, who remained in their original poverty, found themselves left behind in cordiality and intimacy, as well as in circumstances; whilst the subjects of our sketch continued to make new friendships of a more respectable stamp, to fill up, as it were, the places held in their good will by their humble, but neglected, intimates. Let not our readers, however, condemn them for this. It was the act of society, and not of Peter and Ellish. On their parts, it was involuntary; their circumstances raised them, and they were compelled, of course, to rise with their circumstances. They were passing through the journey of life, as it were, and those with whom they set out, not having been able to keep up with them, soon lost their companionship, which was given to those with whom they travelled for the time being. Society is always ready to reward the enterprising and industrious by its just honours, whether they are sought or not; it is so disposed, that every man falls or rises into his proper place in it, and that by the wisdom and harmony of its structure. The rake, who dissipates by profligacy and extravagance that which might have secured him an honourable place in life, is eventually brought to the work-house; whilst the active citizen, who realises an honest independence, is viewed with honour and esteem.

Peter and Ellish were now people of consequence in the parish; the former had ceased to do anything more than superintend the cultivation of his farms; the latter still took an active part in her own business, or rather in the various departments of business which she carried on. Peter

might be seen the first man abroad in the morning proceeding to some of his farms mounted upon a good horse, comfortably dressed in top boots, stout corduroy breeches, buff cashmere waistcoat, and blue broad-cloth coat, to which in winter was added, a strong frieze great-coat, with a drab velvet collar, and a glazed hat. Ellish was also respectably dressed, but still considerably under her circumstances. Her mode of travelling to fairs or markets was either upon a common car, covered with a feather bed and quilt, or behind Peter upon a pillion. This last method flattered Peter's vanity very much; no man could ride on these occasions with a statelier air. He kept himself as erect and stiff as a poker, and brandished the thong of his loaded whip, with the pride of a gentleman farmer.

'Tis true, he did not always hear the sarcastic remarks which were passed upon him by those who witnessed his good-natured vanity:

"There he goes," some labouring man on the wayside would exclaim, "a purse-proud *bodagh* upon our hands. Why, thin, does he forget that we remimber when he kept the shebeen-house, an' sould his smuggled tobaccy in *gits** out of his pocket, for fraid o' the gauger! Sowl, he'd show a blue nose, any way, only for the wife—'Twas she made a man of him."

"Faith, an' I, for one, won't hear Pether Connell run down," his companion would reply; "he's a good-hearted, honest man, an' obligin' enough; an' for that matter so is the wife, a hard honest woman, that made what they have, an' brought herself an' her husband from nothin' to somethin'."

"Thrue for you, Tim; in troth they *do* desarve credit. Still, you see, here's you an' me, an' we've both been slavin' ourselves as much as they have, an' yet you see how we are! However, *it's their luck*, an' there's no use in begrudgin' it to them."

When their children were full grown, the mother did not, as might have been supposed, prevent them from making a respectable appearance. With excellent judgment, she tempered their dress, circumstances, and prospects so well together, that the family presented an admirable display of economy, and a decent sense of independence. From the moment they were able to furnish solid proofs of their ability to give a comfortable dinner occasionally, the priest of the parish began to notice them; and this new intimacy, warmed by the honour conferred on one side, and by the good dinners on the other, ripened into a strong friendship. For many a long year, neither Peter nor Ellish, God forgive them, ever troubled themselves about going to their duty. They soon became, however, persons of too much importance to be damned without an effort made for their salvation. The worthy gentleman accordingly addressed them on the subject, and as the matter was one of perfect indifference to both, they had not the slightest hesitation to go to confession—in compliment to the priest. We do not blame the priest for this; God forbid that we should quarrel with a man for loving a good dinner. If we ourselves were a priest, it is very probable—nay, from the zest with which we approach a good dinner, it is quite certain—that we would have cultivated honest

* Gits—the smallest possible quantities.

Peter's acquaintance, and drawn him out to the practice of that most social of virtues—hospitality. The salvation of such a man's soul was worth looking after; and, indeed, we find a much warmer interest felt, in all churches, for those who are able to *give* good dinners, than for those poor miserable sinners who can scarcely *get* even a bad one.

But besides this, there was another reason for the Rev. Mr. Mulcahy's anxiety to cultivate a friendship with Peter and his wife—which reason consisteth in a very laudable determination to bring about a match between his own niece, Miss Granua Mulcahy and Peter's eldest son, Dan. This speculation he had not yet broached to the family, except by broken hints, and jocular allusions to the very flattering proposals that had been made by many substantial young men for Miss Granua.

In the mean time the wealth of the Connells had accumulated to thousands; their business in the linen and woollen drapery line was incredible. There was scarcely a gentleman within many miles of them, who did not find it his interest to give them his custom. In the hardware, flour, and baking concerns, they were equally fortunate. The report of their wealth had gone far and near, exaggerated, however, as everything of the kind is certain to be; but still there were ample grounds for estimating it at a very high amount.

Their stores were large, and well filled with many a valuable bale; their cellars well stocked with every description of spirits; and their shop, though not large in proportion to their transactions, was well filled, neat, and tastefully fitted up. There was no show, however—no empty glare to catch the eye; on the contrary, the whole concern was marked by an air of solid, warm comfort, that was much more indicative of wealth and independence, than tawdry embellishment would have been.

"Avourneen," said Ellish, "the way to deck out your shop is to keep the best of goods. Wanst the people knows that they'll get betther money-worth here than they'll get anywhere else, they'll come here, whether the shop looks well or ill. Not sayin' but every shop ought to be clane an' dacent, for there's rason in all things."

This, indeed, was another secret of their success. Every article in their shop was of the best description, having been selected by Ellish's own eye and hand in the metropolis, or imported directly from the place of its manufacture. Her periodical visits to Dublin gave her great satisfaction; for it appears that those with whom she dealt, having had sufficient discrimination to appreciate her talents and integrity, treated her with marked respect.

Peter's farm-yard bore much greater evidence of his wealth, than did Ellish's shop. It was certainly surprising to reflect, that by the capacity of two illiterate persons, who began the world with nothing, all the best and latest improvements in farming were either adopted or anticipated. The farm-yard was upon a great scale; for Peter cultivated no less than four hundred acres of land—to such lengths had his enterprise carried him. Threshing machines, large barns, corn-kilns, large stacks, extensive stables, and immense cow-houses, together with the incessant din of active employment perpetually going on—all gave a very high opinion of their great prosperity, and certainly reflected honour upon those whose exertions

had created such a scene about them. One would naturally suppose, when the family of the Connells had arrived to such unexpected riches, and found it necessary to conduct a system whose machinery was so complicated and extensive, that Ellish would have fallen back to the simple details of business, from a deficiency of that comprehensive intelligence which is requisite to conduct the higher order of mercantile transactions; especially as her sons were admirably qualified by practice, example, and education, to ease her of a task, which would appear one of too much difficulty for an unlettered farmer's wife. Such a supposition would be injurious to this excellent woman. So far from this being the case, she was still the moving spirit, the chief conductor of the establishment. Whenever any difficulty arose that required an effort of ingenuity and sagacity, she was able in the homeliest words to disentangle it so happily, that those who heard her wondered that it should at all have appeared to them as a difficulty. She was everywhere. In Peter's farm-yard her advice was as excellent and as useful as in her own shop. On his farms she was the better agriculturist, and she frequently set him right in his plans and speculations for the ensuing year.

She herself was not ignorant of her skill. Many a time has she surveyed the scene about her with an eye in which something like conscious pride might be seen to kindle. On those occasions she usually shook her head, and exclaimed, either in soliloquy, or by way of dialogue, to some person near her:—

"Well, avourneen, all's very right, an' goin' an bravely; but I only hope that when *I'm gone* I won't be missed!"

"Missed," Peter would reply, if he happened to hear her; "oh, upon my credit"—he was a man of too much consequence to swear "by this an' by that" now—"upon my credit, Ellish, if you die soon, you'll see the ginteel wife I'll have in your place."

"Whisht, avourneen! Although you're but jokin', I don't like to hear it, a villish! No, indeed; we wor too long together, Pether, and lived too happily wid one another, for you to have the heart to think of sich a thing!"

"No, in troth, Ellish, I would be long sarry to do it. It's displasin' to you, achree, an' I won't say it. God spare you to us! It was you put the bone in us, an' that's what all the country says, big an' little, young an' ould; an' God he knows it's truth, and nothin' else."

"Indeed, no, thin, Pether, it's not altogether thruth, you desarve your full share of it. You backed me well, acushla, in everything, an' if you had been a dhrinkin, idle, rollikin' vagabone, what 'ud signify all, that me or the likes o' me could do."

"Faith, an' it was you made me what I am, Ellish; you tuck the soft side o' me, you beauty; an' it's well you did, for by this—hem, upon my reputation, if you had gone to cross purposes wid me, you'd find yourself in the wrong box. An', you phanix o' beauty, you managed the childhre, the crathurs, the same way—an' a good way it is, in throth."

"Pether, wor you ever thinkin' o' Father Mulcahy's *sweetness* to us of late?"

"No, thin, the sorra one o' me thought of it. Why, Ellish?"

"Didn't you obsarve that for the last three or four months he's full of attintions to us? Every Sunday he brings *you* up, an' *me, if I'd go*, to the althar, an' keeps you there by way of showin' you respect. Pether, it's not you, but your money he respects; an' I think there ought to be no respect o' persons in the chapel, any how. You're not a bit nearer God by bein' near the althar; for how do we know but the poorest crathur there is nearer to heaven than we are!"

"Faith, sure enough, Ellish; but what deep skame are you penethratin, now, you desaver?"

"I'd lay my life, you'll have a proposial o' marriage from Father Mulcahy, atween our Dan an' Miss Granua. For many a day he's hintin' to us, from time to time, about the great offers she had; now what's the rason, if *she* had these great offers, that *he* didn't take them?"

"Bedad, Ellish, you're the greatest head-piece in all Europe. Murdher alive, woman, what a fine counsellor you'd make. An' suppose he did offer, Ellish, what 'ud you be sayin' to him?"

"Why, that 'ud depind entirely upon what he's able to give her—they say he has money. It 'ud depind, too, upon whether Dan has any likin' for her or not."

"He's often wid her, I know; an' I needn't tell you, Ellish, that afore we wor spliced together, I was often wid somebody that I won't mintion. At all evints, he has made Dan put the big O afore the Connell, so that he has him now full namesake to the Counsellor; an', faith, *that itself 'ud get him a wife.*"

"Well, the best way is to say nothin', an' to hear nothin', till his Reverence spakes out, an' thin we'll see what can be done."

Ellish's sagacity had not misled her. In a few months afterwards Father Mulcahy was asked by young Dan Connell to dine; and as he and honest Ellish were sitting together, in the course of the evening, the priest broached the topic as follows:—

"Mrs. Connell, I think this whiskey is better than my four-year old, that I bought at the auction the other day, although Dan says mine's better. Between ourselves, that Dan is a clever, talented young fellow; and if he happens upon a steady, sensible wife, there is no doubt but he will die a respectable man. But, by the by, Mrs. Connell, you've never tried *my* whiskey; and, upon my credit, you must soon, for I know your opinion would decide the question."

"Is it worth while to decide it, your Reverence? I suppose the thruth is, Sir, that both is good enough for any one; an' I think that's as much as we want."

Thus far she went, but never alluded to Dan, judiciously throwing the *onus* of introducing *that* subject upon the priest.

"Dan says mine's better," observed Father Mulcahy; "and I would certainly give a great deal for his opinion upon that or any other subject, except theology."

"You ought," replied Ellish, "to be a betther judge of whiskey nor either Dan nor me; an' I'll tell you why—you dhrink it in more places, and can make comparishment one wid another; but Dan an' me is confined mostly to our own, an' of that same we take very little, an' the less the betther for people in business, or indeed for anybody."

"Very true, Mrs. Connell! But for all that, I won't give up Dan's judgment in anything within his own line of business, still excepting theology, for which he hasn't the learning."

"He's a good son, without *tay*ology—as good as ever broke the world's bread," said Peter, "glory be to God! Although, for that matther, he ought to be as well acquainted wid *tay*-ology as your Reverence, in regard that he *sells* more of it nor you do."

"A good son, they say, Mrs. Connell, will make a good husband. I wonder you don't think of settling him in life. It's full time."

"Father, avourneen, we must lave that wid himself. I needn't be tellin' you, that it 'ud be hard to find a girl able to bring what the girl that 'ud expect Dan *ought* to bring."

This was a staggerer to the priest, who recruited his ingenuity by drinking Peter's health, and Ellish's.

"Have you *nobody* in your eye for him, Mrs. Connell?"

"Faith, I'll engage she has," replied Peter, with a ludicrous grin—"I'll venture for to say she has *that*."

"Very right, Mrs. Connell; it's all fair. Might one ask who she is; for, to tell you the truth, Dan is a favourite of mine, and I must make it a point to see him well settled."

"Why, your Reverence," replied Peter again, "jist the one you mintioned."

"Who? I? Why I mentioned *nobody*."

"An' *that's* the very one she has in her eye for him, plase your Reverence—ha, ha, ha! What's the world widout a joke, Docthor? beggin' your pardon for makin' so free wid you."

"Peter, you're still a wag," replied the priest; "but, seriously, Mrs. Connell, have you selected any female *of respectable connexions*, as a likely person to be a wife for Dan?"

"Indeed no, your Reverence; I have not. Where could I pitch upon a girl—barrin' a Protestant, an' that 'ud never do—who has a fortune to meet what Dan's to get?"

The priest moved his chair a little, and drank their healths a second time.

"But you know, Mrs. Connell, that Dan needn't care so much about fortune, if he got a girl *of respectable connexions*. He has an independence himself."

"Thrue for you, father; but what right would any girl have to expect to be supported by the hard arnin' of me an' my husband, widout bringin' somethin' forrid herself? You know, Sir, that the fortune always goes wid the wife; but am I to fortune off my son to a girl that has nothin'? If my son, plase your Reverence, hadn't a coat to his back, or a guinea in his pocket—as, God be praised, he has both—but, supposin' he hadn't, what right would he have to expect a girl wid a handsom fortune to marry him? There's Paddy Neill, your sarvant-boy; now, if Paddy, who's an honest man's son, axed your niece, wouldn't you be apt to lose your timper?"

"I beg your pardon, Mrs. Connell, I think your fire's rather hot—allow me to draw back a little. Mrs. Connell, your health again!—Mr. Connell, your fire-side!"

"Thank you, Docthor; but faith I think you ought hardly to dhrink the same fire-side, becase it appears to be rather *hot* for your Reverence, at the present time—ha, ha, ha! Jokin' still, Docthor, we must be. Well, what harm! I wish we may never do worse!"

"And what fortune would you expect with a girl of *genteel connexions*—a girl that's accomplished, we'll say in music, plain work, and Irish, vernacularly?—hem! What fortune would you be expecting with such a girl?"

"Why, Docthor, ahagur, the only music I'd wish for my son's wife is a good timper; an' that's what their music-masthers can't tache thim. The plain work, although I don't know what you mane by it, sounds well enough; an' as to *Irish*, *whick-whackularly*, if you mane our own ould tongue, he may get thousands that can spake it *whackinly*, an' nothin' else."

"You're a wealthy woman, certainly, Mrs. Connell, and what's more, I'm not at all surprised at it. Your health, once more, and long life to you! Suppose, however, that Dan got a fitting wife, what would you expect as a proper portion? I have a reason for asking."

"Dan, plase your Reverence, will get four thousand to begin the world wid; an', as he's to expect none but a Catholic, I suppose if he gets the fourth part of that, it's as much as he ought to look for."

"A thousand pounds!—hut tut! The woman's beside herself. Why look about you, and try where you can find a Catholic girl with a thousand pounds fortune, except in a gentleman's family, where Dan could never think of going."

"That's thrue, any how, your Reverence," observed Peter.—"A thousand pounds! Ellish! you needn't look for it. Where is it to be had out of a gintleman's family, as his Reverence says thrue enough."

"An' now, Docthor," said Ellish, "what 'ud *you* think a girl ought to bring a young man like Dan, that's to have four thousand pounds?"

"I don't think any Catholic girl of his own rank in the county, could get more than a couple of hundred."

"That's one shillin' to every pound he has," replied Ellish, almost instantaneously. "But, Father, you may as well spake out at wanst," she continued, for she was too quick and direct in all her dealings to be annoyed by circumlocution; "you're desairous of a match between Dan an' Miss Granua?"

"Exactly," said the priest; "and what is more, I believe they are fond of each other. I know Dan is attached to her, for he told me so. But, now that we have mentioned her, I say that there is not a more accomplished girl of her persuasion in the parish we sit in. She can play on the bagpipes better than any other piper in the province, for I taught her myself; and I tell you that in a respectable man's wife a knowledge of music is a desirable thing. It's hard to tell, Mrs. Connell, how they may rise in the world, and get into fashionable company, so that accomplishments, you persave, are good. She can make a shirt and wash it, and she can write Irish. As for dancing, I only wish you'd see her at a hornpipe. All these things put together, along with her genteel connexions, and the prospect of what I may be able to lave her—I say your son may do worse."

"It's not what you'd lave her, sir, but what you'd give her in the first place, that I'd like to hear. Spake up, your Reverence, an' let us know how far you *will* go."

"I'm afeard, Sir," said Peter, "if it goes to a clane bargain atween yez, that Ellish will make you bid up for Dan. Be sharp, Sir, or you'll have no chance; faix, you won't."

"But, Mrs. Connell," replied the priest, "before I spake up, consider her accomplishments. I'll undertake to say, that the best bred girl in Dublin cannot perform music in such style, or on such an instrument as the one she uses. Let us contemplate Dan and her after marriage, in an elegant house, and full business, the dinner over, and they gone up to the drawing-room. Think how agreeable and graceful it would be for Mrs. Daniel O'Connell to repair to the sofa, among a few respectable friends, and, taking up her bag-pipes, set her elbow a-going, until the drone gives two or three broken groans, and the chanter a squeak or two, like a child in the cholic, or a cat that you had trampled on by accident. Then comes the real ould Irish music, that warms the heart. Dan looks upon her graceful position, until the tears of love, taste, and admiration are coming down his cheeks. By and by, the toe of him moves: here another foot is going; and, in no time, there is a hearty dance, with a light heart and a good conscience. You or I perhaps, drop in to see them, and, of course, we partake of the enjoyment."

"Divil a pleasanter," said Peter: "I tell you, I'd like it well; an', for my own part, if the deludher here has no objection, *I'm* not goin' to spoil sport."

Ellish looked hard at the priest; her keen blue eye glittered with a sparkling light, that gave decided proofs of her sagacity being intensely excited.

"All that you 've said," she replied, "is very fine; but in regard o' the bag-pipes, an' Miss Granua Mulcahy's squeezin' the music out o' thim —why, if it plased God to bring my son to the staff an' bag—a common beggar—indeed, in that case, Miss Granua's bagpipes might sarve both o' thim, an' help, maybe, to get them a night's lodgin' or so; but until that time comes, if you respect your niece, you 'll burn her bagpipes, dhrone, chanther, an' all. If you *are* for a match, which I doubt, spake out, as I said, and say what fortune you 'll pay down on the nail wid her, otherwise we're losin' our time, an' that's a loss one can't make up."

The priest, who thought he could have bantered Ellish into an alliance, without pledging himself to pay any specific fortune, found that it was necessary for him to treat the matter seriously, if he expected to succeed. He was certainly anxious for the match; and as he really wished to see his niece—who, in truth, was an excellent girl, and handsome—well settled, he resolved to make a stretch and secure Dan if possible.

"Mrs. Connell," said he, "I will be brief with you. The most I can give her is three hundred pounds, and even that by struggling and borrowing. I will undertake to pay it as you say—on the nail! for I am really anxious that my niece should be connected with so worthy and industrious a family. What do you say?"

"*I'm* willin' enough," replied Peter. "It's not asy to get that wid a Catholic girl."

"There 's some thruth in what you say, aroon, sure enough," observed Ellish; "an' if his Reverence puts another hundhre to it, why, in the name of goodness, let them go together. If you don't choose that, Docthor, never breathe the subject to me agin. Dan's not an ould man yit, an' has time enough to get wives in plenty."

"Come," replied the priest, "there's my hand, it's a bargain; although I must say there's no removing you from your point. I *will* give four hundred, hook or crook; but I'll have sad scrambling to get it together. Still I'll make it good."

"Down on the nail?" inquired Ellish.

"Ay! ay! Down on the nail," replied the priest.

"Well, in the name o' Goodness, a bargain be it," said Peter; "but, upon my credit, Ellish, I won't have the bag-pipes burnt, any how. Faith, I must hear an odd tune, now an' thin, when I call to see the childhre."

"Pether, acushla, have sinse. Would you wish to see your daughter-in-law playin' upon the bag-pipes, when she ought to be mindin' her business, or attendin' her childhre? No, your reverence, the pipes must be laid aside. I'll have no piperly connexion for a son of mine."

The priest consented to this, although Peter conceded it with great reluctance. Further preliminaries were agreed upon, and the evening passed pleasantly, until it became necessary for Mr. Mulcahy to bid them good night.

When they were gone, Peter and Ellish talked over the matter between themselves in the following dialogue:

"The fortune's a small one," said Ellish to her husband; "an' I suppose you wondher that I consinted to take so little."

"Sure enough, I wondhered at it," replied Peter: "but, for my own part, I'd give my son to her widout a penny o' fortune, in ordher to be connected wid the priest; an' besides, she's a fine, handsome, good girl—ay, an' his fill of a wife, if she had but the shift to her back."

"Four hundhre wid a priest's niece, Pether, is before double the money wid any other. Don't you know, that when they set up for themselves, he can bring the custom of the whole parish to them? It's unknown the number o' ways he can sarve them in. Sure, at stations an' weddins, wakes, marriages, and funerals, they'll all be proud to let the priest know that they purchased whatever they wanted from his niece an' her husband. Betther!—faix, four hundhre from *him* is worth three times as much from another."

"Glory to you, Ellish!—bright an' cute for ever! Why, I'd back you for a woman that could buy an' sell Europe, aginst the world. Now, isn't it odd that I never think of these long-headed skames?"

"Ay do you, often enough, Pether; but you keep them to yourself, abouchal."

"Faith, I'm close, no doubt of it; an'—but there's no use in sayin' any more about it—you said whatsomever came into my own head consarnin' it. Faith, you did, you phanix."

In a short time the marriage took place. Dan, under the advice of his mother, purchased a piece of ground most advantageously located, as the

site of a mill, whereon an excellent one was built; and as a good mill had been long a desideratum in the country, his success was far beyond his expectations. Every speculation, in fact, which Ellish touched, prospered. Fortune seemed to take delight, either in accomplishing, or anticipating her wishes. At least, such was the general opinion, although nothing could possibly be more erroneous than to attribute her success to mere chance. The secret of all might be ascribed to her good sense, and her exact knowledge of the precise moment when to take the tide of fortune at its flow. Her son, in addition to the mill, opened an extensive mercantile establishment in the next town, where he had ample cause to bless the instructions of his mother, and her foresight in calculating upon the advantage of being married to the priest's niece.

Soon after his marriage, the person who had for many years kept the head inn of the next town died, and the establishment was advertised for sale. Ellish was immediately in action. Here was an opportunity of establishing the second son in a situation which had enabled the late proprietor of it to die nearly the richest man in the parish. A few days, therefore, before that specified for the sale, she took her featherbed car, and had an interview with the executors of the late proprietor. Her character was known, her judgment and integrity duly estimated, and, perhaps, what was the weightiest argument in her favour, her purse was forthcoming to complete the offer she had made. After some private conversation between the executors, her proposal was accepted, and before she returned home, the head inn, together with all its fixtures and furniture, was her property.

The second son, who was called after his father, received the intelligence with delight. One of his sisters was, at his mother's suggestion, appointed to conduct the house-keeping department, and keep the bar, a duty for which she was pretty well qualified by her experience at home.

"I will paint it in great style," said Peter the Younger. "It must be a head Inn no longer; I 'll call it a Hotel, for that's the whole fashion."

"It wants little, avourneen," said his mother; "it was well kep: some paintin' an' other improvements it does want, but don't be extravagant. Have it clane an' dacent, but, above all things, comfortable, an' the attindance good. That's what 'll carry you an—not a flourish o' paintin' outside, an' dirt, an' confusion, an' bad attindance widin. Considher, Pether darlin', that the man who owned it last, feathered his nest well in it, but never called it a Hotill. Let it appear on the outside jist as your ould customers used to see it; but improve it widin as much as you can, widout bein' lavish an it, or takin' up the place wid nonsense."

"At all evints, I 'll have a picture of the Liberator over the door, an' 'O'Connell' written under it. It 's both our names, and besides it will be 'killin' two birds with one stone.'"

"No, avourneen. Let me advise you, if you wish to prosper in life, to keep yourself out of party-work. It only stands betune you an' your business; an' it 's surely wiser for you to mind your own affairs than the affairs of the nation. There 's rason in everything. No man in trade has a right, widout committin' a sin, to neglect his family for politics or parties. There 's Jack Cummins that was doin' well in his groceries, till

he began to make speeches, an' get up public meetins, an' write petitions, an' now he has nothin' to throuble him *but* politics, for his business is gone. Every one has liberty to think as they plase. We can't expect Protestants to think as we do, nor Protestants can't suppose that we ought to think as they'd wish; an' for that same rason, we should make allowance on both sides, an' not be like many we know, that have their minds up, expectin' they don't know what, instead of workin' for themselves and their families as they ought to do. Pether, won't you give that up, a villish?"

"I believe you 're right, mother. I didn't see it before in the light you 've placed it in."

"Then, Pether, darlin', lose no time in gettin' into your place—you an' Alley; an' faix, if you don't both manage it cleverly, I'll never spake to yez."

Here was a second son settled, and nothing remained but to dispose of their two daughters in marriage to the best and most advantageous offers. This, in consequence of their large fortunes, was not a matter of much difficulty. The eldest, Alley, who assisted her brother to conduct the Inn, became the wife of an extensive grazier, who lived in an adjoining county. The younger, Mary, was joined to Father Mulcahy's nephew, not altogether to the satisfaction of the mother, who feared that two establishments of the same kind, in the same parish, supported by the same patronage, must thrive at the expense of each other. As it was something of a love-match, however, she ultimately consented.

"Avourneen," said she, "the parish is big enough, an' has customers enough to support two o' them; an' I 'll engage his Reverence will do what he can for them both."

In the mean time, neither she nor her husband was dependent upon their children. Peter still kept the agricultural department in operation; and although the shop and warehouse were transferred to Mr. Mulcahy, in right of his wife, yet it was under the condition of paying a yearly sum to Mrs. Connell and her husband, ostensibly as a provision, but really as a spur to their exertions. A provision they could not want, for their wealth still amounted to thousands, independently of the large annual profits arising out of their farms.

For some time after the marriage of her youngest daughter, Mrs. Connell took a very active part in her son-in-law's affairs. He possessed neither experience, nor any knowledge of business whatsoever, though he was not deficient in education, nor in capacity to acquire both. This pleased Mrs. Connell very much, who set herself to the task of instructing him in the principles of commercial life, and in the best methods of transacting business.

"The first rules," said she to him, "for you to obsarve is these: tell truth: be sober; be punctual; rise early, persavere; avoid extravagance; keep your word; an' watch your health. Next: don't be proud; give no offince; talk sweetly; be ready to oblage, when you can do it widout inconvanience, but don't put yourself or your business out o' your ways to sarve any body.

"Thirdly: keep an appearance of substance an' comfort about your

place, but don't go beyant your manes in doin' it; when you make a bargain, think what a correcther them you dale wid bears, an' whether or not you found them honest before, if you ever had business wid them.

"When you buy a thing, appear to know your own mind, an' don't be hummin' an' hawin', an' higglin', an' longin' as if your teeth wor watherin' afther it; but be manly, downright, an' quick; they'll then see that you know your business, an' they won't be keepin' off an' an, but will close wid you at wanst.

"Never drink at bargain makin'; an' never pay money in a public-house if you can help it; if you must do it, go into an inn, or a house that you know to be dacent.

"Never stay out late in a fair or market; don't make a poor mouth; on the other hand, don't boast of your wealth; keep no low company; don't be rubbin' yourself aginst your betthers, but keep wid your aquils. File your loose papers an' accounts; an' keep your books up to the day. Never put off any thing that can be done, when it ought to be done. Go early to bed; but be the last up at night, and the first in the mornin', an' there's no fear o' you."

Having now settled all her children in comfort and independence, with each a prospect of rising still higher in the world, Mrs. Connell felt that the principal duties devolving upon her had been discharged. It was but reasonable, she thought, that, after the toil of a busy life, her husband and herself should relax a little, and enjoy with lighter minds the ease for which they had laboured so long and unremittingly.

"Do you know what I'm thinkin' of, Pether?" said she, one summer evening in their farm-yard.

"Know, is it?" replied Peter—"some long-headed plan that none of us 'ud ever think of, but that will stare us in the face the moment you mintion it. What is it, you ould sprig o' beauty?"

"Why, to get a snug jauntin'-car for you an' me. I'd like to see you comfortable in your old days, Pether. You're gettin' stiff, a hagur, an' will be good for nothin', by an' by."

"Stiff! Arrah, by this an' by—my reputation, I'm younger nor e'er a one o' my sons yet, you——eh?" said Peter, pausing—"Faith then I dunna that. Upon my credit, I think, on second thoughts, that a car 'ud be a mighty comfortable thing for me. Faith I do, an' for you, too, Ellish."

"The common car," she continued, "is slow an' throublesome, an' joults the life out o' me."

"By my reputation, you're not the same woman since you began to use it, that you wor before at all. Why, it'll shorten your life. The pillion's dacent enough; but the jauntin'-car!—faix, it's what 'ud make a fresh woman o' you—divil a lie in it."

"You're not puttin' in a word for *yourself* now Pether?"

"To be sure I am, an' for both of us. I'd surely be proud to see yourself an' myself sittin' in our glory upon our own jauntin'-car. Sure we can afford it, an' ought to have it too. Bud-an'-ager! what's the rason I didn't think of it long ago?"

"Maybe you did, acushla; but you forgot it. Wasn't that the way wid you, Pether? Tell the thruth."

"Why, thin, bad luck to the lie in it, since you must know. About this time twelve months—no, faix, I'm wrong, it was afore Dan's marriage—I had thoughts o' spakin' to you about it, but somehow it left my head. Upon my word, I'm in airnest, Ellish."

"Well, avick, make your mind asy; I'll have one from Dublin in less nor a fortnight. I can thin go about of an odd time, an' see how Dan an' Pether's comin' an. It'll be a pleasure to me to advise an' direct thim, sure, as far an' as well as I can. I only hope God will enable thim to do as much for their childher, as he enabled us to do for them, glory be to his name!"

Peter's eye rested upon her as she spoke: a slight shade passed over his face, but it was the symptom of deep feeling and affection, whose current had run smooth and unbroken during the whole life they had spent together.

"Ellish," said he, in a tone of voice that strongly expressed what he felt, "you wor one o' the best wives that ever the Almighty gev to mortual man. You wor, avourneen—you wor, you wor!"

"I intind, too, to begin an' make my sowl a little," she continued; "we had so much to do, Pether, aroon, that, indeed, we hadn't time to think of it all along; but now, that everything *else* is settled, we ought to think about *that*, an' make the most of our time while we can."

"Upon my conscience, I've strong notions myself o' the same thing," replied Peter: "An' I'll back you in that, as well as in everything else. Never fear, if we pull together, but we'll bring up the lost time. Faith, we will! Sowl, if *you* set about it, let me see them that 'ud prevint your goin' to heaven!"

"Did Paddy Donovan get the bay filly's foot aised, Pether?"

"He's gone down wid her to the forge: the poor crathur was very lame to-day."

"That's right; an' let Andy Murtagh bring down the sacks from Drumdough early to-morrow. That whate ought to go to the market on Thursday, an' the other stacks ought to be thrashed out off hand."

"Well, well; so it will be all done. Tare alive! if myself knows how you're able to keep an eye on everything. Come in, an' let us have our *tay*."

For a few months after this, Ellish was perfectly in her element. The jaunting-car was procured; and her spirits seemed to be quite elevated. She paid regular visits to both her sons, looked closely into their manner of conducting business, examined their premises, and subjected every fixture and improvement made or introduced without her sanction, to the most rigorous scrutiny. In fact, what, between Peter's farm, her daughter's shop, and the establishments of her sons, she never found herself more completely encumbered with business. She had intended "to make her soul," but her time was so fully absorbed by the affairs of those in whom she felt so strong an interest, that she really forgot the spiritual resolution in the warmth of her secular pursuits.

One evening, about this time, a horse belonging to Peter happened to

fall into a ditch, from which he was extricated with much difficulty by the labourers. Ellish, who thought it necessary to attend, had been standing for some time directing them how to proceed; her dress was rather thin, and the hour, which was about twilight, chilly, for it was the middle of autumn. Upon returning home she found herself cold, and inclined to shiver. At first she thought but little of these symptoms; for having never had a single day's sickness, she was scarcely competent to know that they were frequently the forerunners of very dangerous and fatal maladies. She complained, however, of slight illness, and went to bed without taking anything calculated to check what she felt. Her sufferings during the night were dreadful: high fever had set in with a fury that threatened to sweep the powers of life like a wreck before it. The next morning the family, on looking into her state more closely, found it necessary to send instantly for a physician.

On arriving, he pronounced her to be in a dangerous pleurisy, from which, in consequence of her plethoric habit, he expressed but faint hopes of her recovery. This was melancholy intelligence to her sons and daughters; but to Peter, whose faithful wife she had been for thirty years, it was a dreadful communication indeed.

"No hopes, Docthor!" he exclaimed, with a bewildered air: "did you say no hopes, Sir?—Oh! no, you didn't—you couldn't say that there's no hopes!"

"The hopes of her recovery, Mr. Connell, are but slender,—if any."

"Docthor, I'm a rich man, thanks be to God an' to ——" he hesitated, cast back a rapid and troubled look towards the bed whereon she lay, then proceeded—"no matther, I'm a rich man: but if you can spare her to me, I'll divide what I'm worth in this world wid you: I will, Sir; an' if that won't do, I'll give up my last shillin' to save her, an' thin I'd beg my bit an' sup through the counthry, only let me have *her* wid me."

"As far as my skill goes," said the doctor, "I shall, of course, exert it to save her; but there are some diseases which we are almost always able to pronounce fatal at first sight. This, I fear, is one of them. Still I do not bid you despair—there is, I trust, a shadow of hope."

"The blessin' o' the Almighty be upon you, Sir, for that word! The best blessing of the heavenly Father rest upon you an' yours for it!"

"I shall return in the course of the day," continued the physician; "and as you feel the dread of her loss so powerfully, I will bring two other medical gentlemen of skill with me."

"Heavens reward you for that, Sir! The heavens above reward you an' them for it! Payment!—och, that signifies but little; but you an' thim 'll be well paid. Oh, Docthor, achora, thry an' save her!—Och, thry an' save her!"

"Keep her easy," replied the doctor, "and let my directions be faithfully followed. In the mean time, Mr. Connell, be a man, and display proper fortitude under a dispensation which is common to all men in your state."

To talk of resignation to Peter was an abuse of words. The poor man had no more perception of the consolations arising from a knowledge of religion than a child. His heart sank within him, for the prop

on which his affections had rested was suddenly struck down from under them.

Poor Ellish was in a dreadful state. Her malady seized her in the very midst of her worldly-mindedness; and the current of her usual thoughts, when stopped by the aberrations of intellect peculiar to her illness, bubbled up, during the temporary returns of reason, with a stronger relish of the world. It was utterly impossible for a woman like her, whose habits of thought, and the tendency of whose affections, had been all directed towards the acquisition of wealth, to wrench them for ever and at once from the objects on which they were fixed. This, at any time, would have been to her a difficult victory to achieve; but now, when stunned by the stroke of disease, and confused by the pangs of severe suffering, tortured by a feverish pulse and a burning brain, to expect that she could experience the calm hopes of religion, or feel the soothing power of Christian sorrow, was utter folly. 'Tis true, her life had been a harmless one: her example, as an industrious and enterprising member of society, was worthy of imitation. She was an excellent mother, a good neighbour, and an admirable wife; but the duties arising out of these different relations of life, were all made subservient to, and mixed up with, her great principle of advancing herself in the world, whilst that which is to come never engaged one moment's serious consideration.

When Father Mulcahy came to administer the rites of the church to Ellish, he found her in a state of incoherency. Occasional gleams of reason broke out through the cloud that obscured her intellect, but they carried with them the marks of a mind knit indissolubly to wealth and aggrandisement. The same tenor of thought, and the same broken fragments of ambitious speculation, floated in rapid confusion through the tempests of delirium which swept with awful darkness over her spirit.

"Mrs. Connell," said he, "can you collect yourself? Strive to compose your mind, so far as to be able to receive the aids of religion."

"Oh, oh!—my blood's boilin'! Is that—is that Father Mulcahy?"

"It is, dear: strive now to keep your mind calm, till you prepare yourself for judgment."

"Keep up his head, Paddy—keep up his head, or he'll be smothered undher the wather an' the sludge. Here, Mike, take this rope: pull, man,—pull, or the horse will be lost! Oh, my head!—I'm boilin'—I'm burnin'!"

"Mrs. Connell, let me entreat you to remember that you are on the point of death, and should raise your heart to God, for the pardon and remission of your sins."

"Oh! Father dear, I neglected that, but I intinded—I intinded—Where's Pether?—bring, bring—Pether to me!"

"Turn your thoughts to God now, my dear. Are you clear enough in your mind for confession?"

"I am, Father; I am avourneen. Come, come here, Pether! Pether, I'm goin' to lave you, asthore machree! I could part wid them all but —but *you*."

"Mrs. Connell, for Heaven's sake"——

"Is this—is this—Father Mulcahy? Oh! I 'm ill—ill!"—

"It is, dear; it is. Compose yourself and confess your sins."

"Where 's Mary? She 'll neglect—neglect to lay in a stock o' linen, although I—I——Oh, Father, avourneen! won't you pity me? I 'm sick—oh, I 'm very sick!"

"You are, dear—you are, God help you, very sick, but you 'll be better soon. Could you confess, dear?—do you think you could?"

"Oh, this pain—this pain!—it 's killin' me!—Pether—Pether, *a suillish machree**, have you des—have you desarted me?"

The priest, conjecturing that if Peter made his appearance she might feel soothed, and perhaps sufficiently composed to confess, called him in from the next room.

"Here 's Peter," said the priest, presenting him to her view—"Here 's Peter, dear."

"Oh! what a load is on me!—this pain—this pain—is killin' me—won't you bring me Pether? Oh, what will I do? Who 's there?"

The mental pangs of poor Peter were, perhaps, equal in intensity to those which she suffered physically.

"Ellish," said he, in smothered sobs—"Ellish, acushla machree, sure I 'm wid you here; here I'm sittin' on the bed wid you, achora machree."

"Catch my hand, thin. Ah, Pether! won't you pity your Ellish?—Won't you pity me—won't you pity me? Oh! this pain—this pain—is killin' me!"

"It is, it is, my heart's delight—it's killin' us both. Oh, Ellish, Ellish! I wish I was dead sooner nor see you in this agony. I ever loved you!—I ever an' always loved you, avourneen dheelish;—but now I would give my heart's best blood, if it 'ud save you. Here 's Father Mulcahy come."

"About the mon—about the money—Pether—what do you intind ——Oh! my blood—my blood 's a-fire!—Mother o' Heaven!—Oh! this pain is—is takin' me from all—ALL!—Rise me up!"

"Here, my darlin'—treasure o' my heart—here—I 'm puttin' your head upon my breast—upon *my* breast, Ellish, ahagur. Marciful Virgin—Father dear," said Peter, bursting into bitter tears—"her head 's like fire! Oh! Ellish, Ellish, Ellish!—but my heart 's brakin' to feel this! Have marcy on her, sweet God—have marcy on her! Bear witness, Father of heaven—bear witness, an' hear the vow of a brakin' heart. I here solemnly promise, before God, to make, if I 'm spared life an' health to do it, a Station on my bare feet to Lough Derg, if it plases you, sweet Father o' pity, to spare her to me this day! Oh! but the hand o' God, Father dear, is terrible!—feel her brow!—Oh! but it 's terrible!"

"It *is* terrible," said the priest; "and terribly is it laid upon her, poor woman! Peter, do not let this scene be lost. Remember it."

"Oh, Father dear, can I ever forget it?—can I ever forget seein' my darlin' in sich agony?"

"Pether," said the sick woman, "will you get the car ready for to-mor—to-morrow—till I look at that piece o' land that Dan bought, before he—he closes the bargain?"

* The light of my heart.

Death of Ellish.

"Father, jewel!" said Peter, "can't you get the world banished out of her heart? Oh, I 'd give all I 'm worth to see that heart fixed upon God! I could bear to part wid her, for she must die some time; but to go wid this world's thoughts an' timptations ragin' strong in her heart—mockin' God, an' hope, an' religion, an' everything:—oh! that I can't bear! Sweet Jasus, change her heart!—Queen o' Heaven, have pity on her, an' save her!"

The husband wept with great sorrow as he uttered these words.

"Neither reasoning nor admonition can avail her," replied the priest; "she is so incoherent that no train of thought is continued for a single minute in her mind. I will, however, address her again. Mrs. Connell, will you make a struggle to pay attention to me for a few minutes? Are you not afraid to meet God? You are about to die!—prepare yourself for judgment."

"Oh, Father dear! I can't—I can't—I *am* af—afraid—Hooh!—hooh!—*God!* You *must* do somethin' for—for me! I ne-ver done anything for myself."

"Glory be to God! that she has that much sinse, any way," exclaimed the husband. "Father, ahagur, I trust my vow was heard."

"Well, my dear—listen to me," continued the priest—"can you not make the best confession possible? Could you calm yourself for it?"

"Pether, avick machree—Pether,"—

"Ellish, avourneen, I 'm here!—my darlin', I *am* your vick machree, an' ever was. Oh, Father! my heart's brakin'! I can't bear to part wid her. Father of heaven, pity us this day of throuble!"

"Be near me, Pether; stay wid me—I'm very lonely. Is this you keepin' my head up?"

"It is, it is! I 'll never lave you till—till"—

"Is the carman come from Dublin wid—wid the broad-cloth?"

"Father of heaven! she 's gone back again!" exclaimed the husband. "Father, jewel! have you no prayers that you 'd read for her? You wor ordained for these things, an' comin' from *you*, they'll have more stringth. Can you do nothin' to save my darlin'?"

"My prayers will not be wanting," said the priest: "but I am watching for an interval of sufficient calmness to hear her confession; and I very much fear that she will pass in darkness. At all events, I will anoint her by and by. In the mean time, we must persevere a little longer; she may become easier, for it often happens that reason gets clear immediately before death."

Peter sobbed aloud, and wiped away the tears that streamed from his cheeks. At this moment her daughter and son-in-law stole in, to ascertain how she was, and whether the rites of the church had in any degree soothed or composed her.

"Come in, Denis," said the priest to his nephew, "you may both come in. Mrs. Mulcahy, speak to your mother: let us try every remedy that might possibly bring her to a sense of her awful state."

"Is she raving still?" inquired the daughter, whose eyes were red with weeping.

The priest shook his head;—"Ah, she is—she is! and I fear she will

scarcely recover her reason before the judgment of heaven opens upon her!"

"Oh thin may the Mother of Glory forbid that!" exclaimed her daughter—"anything at all but that! Can you do nothin' for her, uncle?"

"I 'm doing all I can for her, Mary," replied the priest; "I 'm watching a calm moment to get her confession, if possible."

The sick woman had fallen into a momentary silence, during which she caught the bed-clothes like a child, and felt them, and seemed to handle their texture, but with such an air of vacancy as clearly manifested that no corresponding association existed in her mind.

The action was immediately understood by all present. Her daughter again burst into tears; and Peter, now almost choked with grief, pressing the sick women to his heart, kissed her burning lips.

"Father, jewel," said the daughter, "there it is, and I feared it—*the sign*, uncle—the sign!—don't you see her gropin' the clothes? Oh, mother, darlin', darlin'!—are we going to lose you for ever?"

"Oh! Ellish, Ellish—won't you spake one word to me afore you go? Won't you take one farewell of *me*—of ME, aroon asthore, before you depart from us for ever!" exclaimed her husband.

"Feeling the bed-clothes," said the priest, "is not *always* a sign of death; I have known many to recover after it."

"Husht," said Peter—"husht!—Mary—Mary! Come here—hould your tongues! Oh, *it's past*—it's past!—it's all past, an' gone—all hope's over! Heavenly father!"

The daughter after listening for a moment, in a paroxysm of wild grief, clasped her mother's recumbent body in her arms, and kissed her lips with a vehemence almost frantic. "You won't go, my darlin'—is it from your own Mary that you 'd go? Mary, that you loved best of all your childhre!—Mary, that you always said, an' every body said, was your own image! Oh, you won't go without one word, to say you know her!"

"For Heaven's sake," said Father Mulcahy, "what do you mean?—are you mad?"

"Oh! uncle dear! don't you hear?—don't you hear?—listen, an' sure you will—all hope 's *gone* now—gone—gone! *The dead rattle!*—listen! —the dead rattle 's in her throat!"—

The priest bent his ear a moment, and distinctly heard the gurgling noise produced by the phlegm, which is termed with wild poetical accuracy, by the peasantry—the "dead rattle," or "death rattle," because it is the immediate and certain forerunner of death.

"True," said the priest—"too true; the last shadow of hope is gone. We must now make as much of the time as possible. Leave the room for a few minutes, till I anoint her. I will then call you in."

They accordingly withdrew, but in about fifteen or twenty minutes he once more summoned them to the bed of the dying woman.

"Come in," said he, "I have anointed her—come in, and kneel down till we offer up a Rosary to the Blessed Virgin, under the hope that she may intercede with God for her, and cause her to pass out of life happily. She was calling for you, Peter, in your absence; you had better stay with her."

"I will," said Peter, in a broken voice, "I 'll stay nowhere else."

"An' I 'll kneel at the bed-side," said the daughter. "She was the kind mother to me, and to us all; but to me in particular. 'Twas with me she took her choice to live, when they war all striving for her. Oh," said she, taking her mother's hand between hers, and kneeling down to kiss it, "a Vahr dheelish!* did we ever think to see you departing from us this way! snapped away without a minute's warning! If it was a long sickness, that you 'd be calm and sinsible in; but to be hurried away into eternity, and your mind dark! Oh, Vahr dheelish, my heart is broke to see you this way!"

"Be calm," said the priest; "be quiet till I open the Rosary."

He then offered up the usual prayers which precede its repetition, and after having concluded them, commenced what is properly called the Rosary itself, which consists of fifteen Decades, each Decade containing the Hail Mary repeated ten times, and the Lord's Prayer once. In this manner the Decade goes round from one to another, until, as we have said above, it is repeated fifteen times; or, in all the *Ave Maria's* one hundred and sixty-five times, without variation. From the indistinct utterance, elevated voice, and rapid manner in which it is pronounced, it certainly has a wild, and is more strongly impressed with the character of a mystic rite, or incantation, than with any other religious ceremony with which we could compare it.

When the priest had repeated the first part, he paused for the response; neither the husband nor daughter, however, could find utterance.

"Denis," said he, to his nephew, "do you take up the next."

His nephew complied; and with much difficulty Peter and his daughter were able to join in it, repeating here and there a word or two, as well as their grief and sobbings would permit them.

The heart must indeed have been an unfeeling one, to which a scene like this would not have been deeply touching and impressive. The poor dying woman reclined with her head upon her husband's bosom; the daughter knelt at the bed-side, with her mother's hand pressed against her lips, she herself convulsed with sorrow—the priest was in the attitude of earnest supplication, having the stole about his neck, his face and arms raised towards heaven—the son-in-law was bent over a chair, with his face buried in his hands. Nothing could exceed the deep, the powerful expression of entreaty, which marked every tone and motion of the parties, especially those of the husband and daughter. They poured an energy into the few words which they found voice to utter, and displayed such a concentration of the faculties of the soul in their wild unregulated attitudes, and streaming upturned eyes, as would seem to imply that their own salvation depended upon that of the beloved object before them. Their words, too, were accompanied by such expressive tokens of their attachment to her, that the character of prayer was heightened by the force of the affection which they bore her. When Peter, for instance, could command himself to utter a word, he pressed his dying wife to his bosom, and raised his eyes to heaven in a manner that would have melted

* Sweet mother!

any human heart; and the daughter, on joining occasionally in the response, pressed her mother's hand to her heart, and kissed it with her lips, conscious that the awful state of her parent had rendered more necessary the performance of the two tenderest duties connected with a child's obedience —prayer and affection.

When the son-in-law had finished his Decade, a pause followed, for there was none now to proceed but her husband or her daughter.

"Mary, dear," said the priest, "be a woman; don't let your love for your mother prevent you from performing a higher duty. Go on with the prayer—you see she is passing fast."

"I'll try, uncle," she replied—"I'll try; but—but—it's hard, hard, upon me."

She commenced, and by an uncommon effort so far subdued her grief, as to render her words intelligible. Her eyes, streaming with tears, were fixed with a mixture of wildness, sorrow, and devotedness, upon the countenance of her mother, until she had completed her Decade.

Another pause ensued. It was now necessary, according to the order and form of the Prayer, that Peter should commence, and offer up his supplications for the happy passage from life to eternity of her who had been his inward idol during a long period. Peter knew nothing about sentiment, or the philosophy of sorrow; but he loved his wife with the undivided power of a heart in which nature had implanted her strongest affections. He knew, too, that his wife had loved him with a strength of heart equal to his own. He loved her, and she deserved his love.

The pause, when the prayer had gone round to him, was long; those who were present at length turned their eyes towards him, and the priest, now deeply affected, cleared his voice, and simply said, "Peter," to remind him that it was his duty to proceed with the Rosary.

Peter, however, instead of uttering the prayer, burst out into a tide of irrepressible sorrow.—"Oh!" said he, enfolding her in his arms, and pressing his lips to hers: "Ellish, ahagur machree! sure when I think of all the goodness, an' kindness, an' tendherness that you showed me—whin I think of your smiles upon me, whin you wanted me to do the right, an' the innocent plans you made out, to benefit me an' mine! —Oh! where was your harsh word, a villish?—where was your could brow, or your bad tongue? Nothin' but goodness—nothin' but kindness, an' love, an wisdom, ever flowed from these lips! An' now, darlin', pulse o' my broken heart! these same lips can't spake to me— —these eyes don't know me—these hands don't feel me—nor your ears doesn't hear me!"

"Is—is—it *you?*" replied his wife, feebly—"is it—YOU?—come—come near me—my heart—my heart says it misses *you*—come near me!"

Peter again pressed her in an embrace, and in doing so, unconsciously received the parting breath of a wife whose prudence and affection had saved him from poverty, and, probably, from folly or crime.

The priest, on turning round to rebuke Peter for not proceeding with the prayer, was the first who discovered that she had died; for the grief of her husband was too violent to permit him to notice anything with much accuracy.

"Peter," said he, "I beg your pardon; let me take the trouble of supporting her for a few minutes, after which I must talk to you seriously—very seriously."

The firm, authoritative tone in which the priest spoke, together with Peter's consciousness that he had acted wrongly by neglecting to join in the rosary, induced him to retire from the bed with a rebuked air. The priest immediately laid back the head of Mrs. Connell on the pillow, and composed the features of her lifeless face with his own hands. Until this moment none of them, except himself, knew that she was dead.

"Now," continued he, "all her cares, and hopes, and speculations, touching this world are over—so is her pain; her blood will soon be cold enough, and her head will ache no more. She is dead. Grief is therefore natural; but let it be the grief of a man, Peter. Indeed, it is less painful to look upon her now, than when she suffered such excessive agony. Mrs. Mulcahy, hear me! Oh, it's in vain! Well, well, it *is* but natural; for it was an unexpected and a painful death!"

The cries of her husband and daughter soon gave intimation to her servants that her pangs were over. From the servants it immediately went to the neighbours, and thus did the circle widen until it reached the furthest ends of the parish. In a short time, also, the mournful sounds of the church-bell, in slow and measured strokes, gave additional notice that a Christian soul had passed into eternity.

It is in such scenes as these that the Roman Catholic clergy knit themselves so strongly into the affections of the people. All men are naturally disposed to feel the offices of kindness and friendship more deeply, when tendered at the bed of death or of sickness, than under any other circumstances. Both the sick-bed and the house of death are necessarily the sphere of a priest's duty, and to render them that justice which we will ever render, when and wheresoever it may be due, we freely grant that many shining, nay, noble instances of Christian virtue are displayed by them on such occasions.

When the violence of grief produced by Ellish's death had subsided, the priest, after giving them suitable exhortations to bear the affliction which had just befallen them with patience, told Peter, that as God, through the great industry and persevering exertions of her who had then departed to another world, had blessed him abundantly with wealth and substance, it was, considering the little time which had been allowed her to repent in a satisfactory manner for her transgressions, his bounden and solemn duty to set aside a suitable portion of that wealth for the delivery of her soul from purgatory, where, he trusted, in the mercy of God, it was permitted to remain.

"Indeed, your Reverence," replied Peter, "it wasn't necessary to mintion it, considherin' the way she was cut off from among us, widout even time to confess."

"But blessed be God," said the daughter, "she received the ointment at any rate, and that of itself would get her to purgatory."

"And I can answer for her," said Peter, "that she *intended*, as soon as she 'd get everything properly settled for the childhre, to make her sowl."

"Ah! good intentions," said the priest, "wont do. I, however, have forewarned you of your duty, and must now leave the guilt or the merit of relieving her departed spirit, upon you and the other members of her family, who are all bound to leave nothing undone that may bring her from pain and fire, to peace and happiness."

"Och! och! asthore, asthore! you 're lyin' there—an', oh, Ellish, avourneen, could you think that I—*I*—would spare money—trash—to bring you to glory wid the angels o' heaven! No, no, Father dear. It 's good, an' kind, an' thoughtful of you to put it into my head; but I did n't intind to neglect or forget it. Oh, how will I live wantin' her, Father? When I rise in the mornin', a villish, where 'll be your smile and your voice? We won 't hear your step, nor see you as we used to do, movin' pleasantly about the place. No—you 're gone, avourneen—gone—an' we 'll see you and hear you no more!"

His grief was once more about to burst forth, but the priest led him out of the room, kindly chid him for the weakness of his immoderate sorrow, and after making arrangements about the celebration of mass for the dead, pressed his hand, and bade the family farewell.

The death of Ellish excited considerable surprise, and much conversation in the neighbourhood. Every point of her character was discussed freely, and the comparisons instituted between her and Peter were any thing but flattering to the intellect of her husband.

"An' so Ellish is whipped off, Larry," said a neighbour to one of Peter's labouring men. "Faix, an' the best feather in their wing is gone."

"Ay, sure enough, Risthard, you may say that. It was her cleverness made them what they are. She was the best manager in the three kingdoms."

"Ah, she was the woman could make a bargain. I only hope she hasn't brought the luck o' the family away wid her!"

"Why, man alive, she made the sons and daughters as clever as herself —put them up to everything. Indeed, it's quare to think of how that one woman brought them an, an' ris them to what they are!"

"They shouldn't forget themselves as they 're doin', thin; for betune you an' me, they 're as proud as Turks, an' God he sees it ill becomes them—sits very badly on them itself, when everybody knows that their father an' mother begun the world wid a bottle of private whiskey an' half a pound of smuggled tobaccy."

"Poor Pether will break his heart, any way. Oh, man, but she was the good wife. I 'm livin' wid them goin' an seven year, an' never hard a cross word from the one to the other. It's she that had the sweet tongue all out, an' *did* manage him; but, afther all, he was worth the full o' the Royal George of her. Many a time, when some poor craythur 'ud come to ax whiskey on score *to put over** some o' their friends, or for a weddin', or a christenin', maybe, an' when the wife 'ud refuse it, Pether 'ud send what whiskey they wanted afther them, widout lettin' her know anything about it. An', indeed, he never lost anything by that; for if

* To put over—the *corpse* of a friend. That is to be drunk at the wake and funeral.

they wor to sell their cow, he should be ped, in regard of the kindly way he gave it to them."

"Well, we'll see how they'll manage now that she's gone; but Pether an' the youngest daughther, Mary, is to be pitied."

"The sarra much; barrin' that they'll miss her at first from about the place. You see she has left them above the world, an' full of it. Wealth and substance enough may they thank her for; and that's very good comfort for sorrow, Risthard."

"Faith, sure enough, Larry. There's no lie in that, any way!"

"Awouh! Lie! I have you about it."

Such was the view which had been taken of their respective characters through life. Yet notwithstanding that the hearts of her acquaintances never *warmed to her*—to use a significant expression current among the peasantry—as they did to Peter, still she was respected almost involuntarily for the indefatigable perseverance with which she pushed forward her own interests through life. Her funeral was accordingly a large one; and the conversation which took place at it, turning, as it necessarily did, upon her extraordinary talents and industry, was highly to the credit of her memory and virtues. Indeed, the attendance of many respectable persons of all creeds and opinions, gave ample proof that the qualities she possessed had secured for her general respect and admiration.

Poor Peter, who was an object of great compassion, felt himself completely crushed by the death of his faithful partner. The reader knows that he had hitherto been a sober, and, owing to Ellish's prudent control, an industrious man. To thought or reflection he was not, however, accustomed; he had, besides, never received any education; if his morals were correct, it was because a life of active employment had kept him engaged in pursuits which repressed immorality, and separated him from those whose society and influence might have been prejudicial to him. He had scarcely known calamity, and when it occurred he was prepared for it neither by experience, nor a correct view of moral duty. On the morning of his wife's funeral, such was his utter prostration both of mind and body, that even his own sons, in order to resist the singular state of collapse into which he had sunk, urged him to take some spirits. He was completely passive in their hands, and complied. This had the desired effect, and he found himself able to attend the funeral. When the friends of Ellish assembled, after the interment, as is usual, to drink and talk together, Peter, who could scarcely join in the conversation, swallowed glass after glass of punch with great rapidity. In the mean time, the talk became louder and more animated; the punch, of course, began to work, and as they sat long, it was curious to observe the singular blending of mirth and sorrow, singing and weeping, laughter and tears, which characterised this remarkable scene. Peter, after about two hours' hard drinking, was not an exception to the influence of this trait of national manners. His heart having been deeply agitated, was the more easily brought under the effects of contending emotions. He was naturally mirthful, and when intoxication had stimulated the current of his wonted humour, the influence of this and his recent sorrow, produced such an

anomalous commixture of fun and grief as could seldom, out of Ireland, be found checkering the mind of one individual.

It was in the midst of this extraordinary din that his voice was heard commanding silence in its loudest and best-humoured key:

"Hould yer tongues," said he; "bad win to yees, don't you hear me wantin' to sing! Whist wid yees. Hem—och—'Rise up'—Why, thin, Phil Callaghan, you might thrate me wid more dacency, if you had gumption in you; I 'm sure no one has a betther right to sing first in this company nor myself; an' what's more, I *will* sing first. Hould your tongues! Hem!"

He accordingly commenced a popular song, the air of which, though simple, was touchingly mournful.

"Och, rise up, Willy Reilly, an' come alongst wid me,
I 'm goin' for to go wid you, and lave this coun-ter-ee;
I 'm goin' to lave my father, his castles and free lands—
An' away wint Willy Reilly, an' his own Colleen Bawn.

"Och, they wint o'er hills an' mountains, and valleys that was fair,
An' fled before her father, as you may shortly hear;
Her father followed afther wid a well-chosen armed band,
Och, an' taken was poor Reilly, an' his own Colleen Bawn."

The simple pathos of the tune, the affection implied by the words, and probably the misfortune of Willy Reilly, all overcame him. He finished the second verse with difficulty, and on attempting to commence a third he burst into tears.

"Colleen bawn! (fair, or fair-haired, girl)—Colleen bawn!" he exclaimed; "she 's lyin' low that was *my* colleen bawn! Oh, will ye hould your tongues, an' let me think of what has happened me? She 's gone: Mary, avourneen, isn't she gone from us? I 'm alone, an' I 'll be always lonely. Who have I now to comfort me? I know I have good childhre, neighbours; but none o' them, all of them, if they wor ten times as many, is n't aqual to her that 's in the grave. Her hands won't be about me—there was tindherness in their very touch. An', of a Sunday mornin', how she 'd tie an my handkerchy, for I never could rightly tie it an myself, the knot was ever an' always too many for me; but, och, och, she 'd tie it an so snug an' purty wid her own hands, that I did n't look the same man! The same song was *her* favourite. Here 's your healths; an' sure it 's the first time ever we wor together that she was n't wid us: but now, avillish, you 're voice is gone—you 're silent an' lonely in the grave; an' why should n't I be sarry for the wife o' my heart that never angered me? Why shouldn 't I? Ay, Mary, asthore, machree, good right you have to cry afther her; she was the kind mother to you; her heart was fixed in you; there 's her fatures on your face; her very eyes, an' fair hair, too, an' I 'll love you, achora, ten times more nor ever, for her sake. Another favourite song of hers, God rest her, was 'Brian O'Lynn.' Throth an' I 'll sing it, so I will, for if she was livin' she 'd like it.

'Och, Brian O'Lynn, he had milk an' male,
A two-lugged porringer wantin' a tail.'

Och, my head 's through other! The sarra one o' me, I bleeve, but 's out

o' the words, or, as they say, there 's a hole in the ballad. Send round the punch will ye? By the hole o' my coat, Parra Gastha, I 'll whale you widin an inch of your life, if you don 't dhrink. Send round the punch, Dan; an' give us a song, Parra Gastha. Arrah, Paddy, do you remimber—ha, ha, ha—upon my credit, I 'll never forget it, the fun we had catchin' Father Soolaghan's horse, the day he gave his shirt to the sick man in the ditch. The Lord rest his sowl in glory—ha, ha, ha—I 'll never forget it. Paddy, the song, you thief?"

"No, but tell them about that, Misther Connell."

"Throth, an' I will; but do n't be *Mistherin* me. Faith, this is the height o' good punch. You see—ha, ha, ha! You see, it was one hard summer afore I was marrid to Ellish—mavourneen, that you wor, asthore! Och, och, are we parted at last? Upon my sowl, my heart 's breakin'—breakin', (*weeps*); an' no wondher! But as I was saying'—all your healths! faith, it *is* tip-top punch that—the poor man fell sick of a faver, an' sure enough, when it was known what ailed him, the neighbours built a little shed on the roadside for him, in regard that every one was afeard to let him into their place. Howsomever—ha, ha, ha—Father Soolaghan was one day ridin' past upon his horse, an' seein' the crathur lyin' undher the shed, on a wisp o' sthraw, he pulls bridle, an' puts the spake an the poor sthranger. So, begad, it came out, that the neighbours were very kind to him, an' used to hand over whatsomever they thought best for him from the back o' the ditch, as well as they could.

"'My poor fellow,' said the priest, 'you 're badly off for linen.'

"'Thrue for you, Sir,' said the sick man, 'I never longed for anything so much in my life, as I do for a clane shirt an' a glass o' whiskey.'

"'The devil a glass o' whiskey I have about me, but you shall have the clane shirt, you poor compassionate crathur,' said the priest, stretchin' his neck up an' down, to make sure there was no one comin' on the road—ha, ha, ha!

"Well an' good—'I have *three* shirts,' says his Reverence, 'but I have only one o' them an me, an' that you shall have.'

"So the priest peels himself on the spot, an' lays his black coat and waistcoat afore him acrass the saddle, thin takin' off his shirt, he *threwn* it acrass the ditch to the sick man. Whether it was the white shirt, or the black coat danglin' about the horse's neck, the divil a one o' myself can say, but any way, the baste tuck fright, an' made off wid Father Soolaghan, in the state I'm tellin' yez, upon his back—ha, ha, ha!

"Parra Gastha, here, an' I war goin' up at the time to do a little in the distillin' way for Tom Duggan of Aidinasamlagh, an' seen what was goin' an. So off we set, an' we splittin' our sides laughin'—ha, ha, ha—at the figure the priest cut. However, we could do no good, an' he never could pull up the horse, till he came full flight to his own house, opposite the pound there below, and the whole town in convulsions when they seen him. We *gother* up his clothes, an' brought them home to him, an' a good piece o' fun we had wid him, for he loved the joke as well as any man. Well, he was the good an' charitable man, the same Father Soolaghan; but so simple that he got himself into fifty scrapes, God rest him! Och, och, she 's lyin' low that often laughed at that, an' I 'm here

—ay, I have no one, no one that 'ud show me sich a warm heart as she would. (*weeps*). However, God's will be done. I 'll sing yez a song she liked:—

'Och, Brian O'Lynn, he had milk an' male,
A two-lugged porringer wantin' a tail.'

Musha, I'm out agin—ha, ha, ha! Why, I b'lieve there's pishthrogues an me, or I 'd remember it. Bud-an-age, dhrink all of ye. Lie in to the liquor, I say; don't spare it. Here, Mike, send us up another gallon. Faith, we 'll make a night of it.

'Och, three maidens a milkin' did go
An' three maidens a milkin' did go;
An' the winds they blew high,
An' the winds they blew low,
An' they dashed their milkin' pails to an' fro.'

All your healths, childhre! Neighbours, all your healths! do n't spare what 's before ye. It 's long since I tuck a jorum myself an—come, I say, plase God, we 'll often meet this way, so we will. Faith, I 'll take a sup from this forrid, wid a blessin'. Dhrink, I say, dhrink!"

By the time he had arrived at this pitch, he was able to engross no great portion either of the conversation or attention. Almost every one present had his songs, his sorrows, his laughter, or his anecdotes, as well as himself. Every voice was loud; and every tongue busy. Intricate and entangled was the talk, which, on the present occasion, presented a union of all the extremes which the lights and shadows of the Irish character alone could exhibit under such a calamity as that which brought the friends of the deceased together.

Peter literally fulfilled his promise of taking a jorum in future. He was now his own master; and as he felt the loss of his wife deeply, he unhappily had recourse to the bottle, to bury the recollection of a woman, whose death left a chasm in his heart, which he thought nothing but the whiskey could fill up.

His transition from a life of perfect sobriety to one of habitual, nay, of daily intoxication, was immediate. He could not bear to be sober; and his extraordinary bursts of affliction, even in his cups, were often calculated to draw tears from the eyes of those who witnessed them. He usually went out in the morning with a flask of whiskey in his pocket, and sat down to weep behind a ditch—where, however, after having emptied his flask, he might be heard at a great distance, singing the songs which Ellish in her life-time was accustomed to love. In fact, he was generally pitied; his simplicity of character, and his benevolence of heart, which was now exercised without fear of responsibility, made him more a favourite than he ever had been. His former habits of industry were thrown aside; as he said himself, he hadn't heart to work; his farms were neglected, and but for his son-in-law, would have gone to ruin. Peter himself was sensible of this.

"Take them," said he, "into your own hands, Denis; for me, I'm not able to do anything more at them; she that kep me up is gone, an' I'm broken down. Take them—take them into your own hands. Give me my bed, bit, an' sup, an' that 's all I want."

Six months produced an incredible change in his appearance. Intemperance, whilst it shattered his strong frame, kept him in frequent exuberance of spirits; but the secret grief preyed on him within. Artificial excitement kills, but it never cures; and Peter, in the midst of his mirth and jollity, was wasting away into a shadow. His children, seeing him go down the hill of life so rapidly, consulted among each other on the best means of winning him back to sobriety. This was a difficult task, for his powers of bearing liquor were prodigious. He has often been known to drink so many as twenty-five, and sometimes thirty tumblers of punch, without being taken off his legs, or rendered incapable of walking about. His friends, on considering who was most likely to recall him to a more becoming life, resolved to apply to his landlord—the gentleman whom we have already introduced to our readers. He entered warmly into their plan, and it was settled, that Peter should be sent for, and induced, if possible, to take an oath against liquor. Early the following day a liveried servant came down to inform him that his master wished to speak with him.

"To be sure," said Peter; "divil resave the man in all Europe I'd do more for than the same gintleman, if it was only on account of the regard he had for her that's gone. Come, I'll go wid you in a minute."

He accordingly returned with the flask in his hand, saying, "I never thravel widout a pocket-pistol, John. The times, you see, is not overly safe, an' the best way is to be prepared!—ha, ha, ha! Och, och! It houlds three half-pints."

"I think," observed the servant, "you had better not taste that till after your return."

"Come away, man," said Peter; we'll talk upon it as we go along: I couldn't do readily widout it. You hard that I lost Ellish?"

"Yes," replied the servant, "and I was very sorry to hear it."

"Did you attind the berrin?"

"No, but my master did," replied the man; "for, indeed, his respect for your wife was very great, Mr. Connell."

This was before ten o'clock in the forenoon, and about one in the afternoon a stout countryman was seen approaching the gentleman's house, with another man bent round his neck, where he hung precisely as a calf hangs round the shoulders of a butcher, when he is carrying it to his stall.

"Good Heavens!" said the owner of the mansion to his lady, "what has happened to John Smith, my dear? Is he dead?"

"Dead!" said his lady, going in much alarm to the drawing-room window: "I protest I fear so, Frank. He is evidently dead! For God's sake go down and see what has befallen him."

Her husband went hastily to the hall-door, where he met Peter with his burden.

"In the name of Heaven, what has happened, Connell?—what is the matter with John? Is he living or dead?"

"First, plase your honour, as I have him on my shouldhers, will you tell me where his bed is?" replied Peter. "I may as well lave him snug, as my hand's in, poor fellow. The devil's bad head he has, your honour. Faith, it's a burnin' shame, so it is, an' nothin' else—to be able to bear so little!"

The lady, children, and servants, were now all assembled about the dead footman, who hung, in the mean time, very quietly round Peter's neck.

"Gracious Heaven! Connell, is the man dead?" she inquired.

"Faith, thin, he is, Ma'am,—for a while any how; but, upon my credit, it 's a burnin' shame, so it is,"——

"The man is drunk, my dear," said her husband—"he's only drunk."

"—— a burnin' shame, so it is—to be able to bear no more nor about six glasses, an' the whiskey good, too. Will you ordher one o' thim to show me his bed, Ma'am, if you plase," continued Peter, "while he 's an me? It 'll save throuble."

"Connell is right," observed his landlord.—"Gallagher, show him John's bed-room."

Peter accordingly followed another servant, who pointed out his bed, and assisted to place the vanquished footman in a somewhat easier position than that in which Peter had carried him.

"Connell," said his landlord, when he returned, "how did this happen?"

"Faith, thin, it 's a burnin' shame," said Connell, "to be able only to bear"——

"But *how* did it happen? for he has been hitherto a perfectly sober man."

"Faix, plase your honour, asy enough," replied Peter; "he begun to lecthur me about dhrinkin', so, says I, 'Come an' sit down behind the hedge here, an' we 'll talk it over between us;' so we went in, the two of us, a-back o' the ditch—an' he began to advise me agin dhrink, an' I began to tell him about her that 's gone, Sir. Well, well! och, och! no matther!—So, Sir, one story an' one pull from the bottle, brought on another, for divil a glass we had at all, Sir. Faix, he 's a tindher-hearted boy, anyhow; for as myself begun to let the tears down, whin the bottle was near out, divil resave the morsel of him but cried afther poor Ellish, as if she had been his mother. Faix, he did! An' it won't be the last sup we 'll have together, plase goodness! But the best of it was, Sir, that the dhrunker he got, he abused me the more for dhrinkin'. Oh, thin, but he 's the pious boy whin he gets a sup in his head! Faix, it 's a pity ever he 'd be sober, he talks so much scripthur an' devotion in his liquor!"

"Connell," said the landlord, "I am exceedingly sorry to hear that you have taken so openly and inveterately to drink as you have done, ever since the death of your admirable wife. This, in fact, was what occasioned me to send for you. Come into the parlour. Don't go, my dear; perhaps *your* influence may also be necessary. Gallagher, look to Smith, and see that every attention is paid him, until he recovers the effects of his intoxication."

He then entered the parlour, where the following dialogue took place between him and Peter:—

"Connell, I am really grieved to hear that you have become latterly so incorrigible a drinker; I sent for you to-day, with the hope of being able to induce you to give it up."

"Faix, your honour, it 's jist what I 'd expect from your father's son—

kindness, an' dacency, an' devotion, wor always among yez. Divil resave the family in all Europe I 'd do so much for as the same family."

The gentleman and lady looked at each other, and smiled. They knew that Peter's blarney was no omen of their success in the laudable design they contemplated.

"I thank you, Peter, for your good opinion; but in the meantime allow me to ask, what can you propose to yourself by drinking so incessantly as you do?"

"What do I propose to myself by dhrinkin', is it? Why thin to banish grief, your honour. Surely you 'll allow that no man has reason to complain who 's able to banish the thief for two shillins a-day. I reckon the whiskey at first cost, so that it doesn't come to more nor that at the very outside."

"That is taking a commercial view of affliction, Connell; but you must promise me to give up drinking."

"Why thin upon my credit, your honour astonishes me. Is it to give up banishin' grief? I have a regard for you, Sir, for many a dalin we had together; but for all that, faix, I 'd be miserable for no man, barrin' for her that 's gone. If I 'd be so to oblage any one, I 'd do it for your family; for divil resave the family in all Europe"——

"Easy, Connell—I am not to be palmed off in that manner; I really have a respect for the character which you bore, and wish you to recover it once more. Consider that you are disgracing yourself and your children by drinking so excessively from day to day—indeed, I am told, almost from hour to hour."

"Augh! don't believe the half o' what you hear, Sir. Faith, somebody has been dhrawin' your honour out! Why I am never dhrunk, Sir; faith, I 'm not."

"You will destroy your health, Connell, as well as your character; besides, you are not to be told that it is a sin, a crime against God, and an evil example to society."

"Show me the man, plase your honour, that ever seen me *incapable*. That 's the proof o' the thing."

"But why do you drink at all? It is not necessary."

"An' do *you* never taste a dhrop yourself, Sir, plase your honour? I'll be bound you do, Sir, raise your little finger of an odd time, as well as another. Eh, Ma'am? That 's comin' close to his honour! An' faix, small blame to him, an' a weeshy sup o' the wine to the misthress herself, to correct the tindherness of her dilicate appetite."

"Peter, this bantering must not pass: I think I have a claim upon your respect and deference. I have uniformly been *your* friend, and the friend of your children and family, but more especially of your late excellent, and exemplary wife."

"Before God an' man, I acknowledge that, Sir—I do—I do. But, Sir, to spake sarious—it's thruth, Ma'am, downright—to spake sarious, my heart's broke, an' every day it 's brakin' more an' more. She 's gone, Sir, that used to manage me; an' now I can't turn myself to anything, barrin' the dhrink—God help me!"

"I honour you, Connell, for the attachment which you bear towards

the memory of your wife, but I utterly condemn the manner in which you display it. To become a drunkard is to disgrace her memory. You know it was a character she detested."

"I know it all, Sir, an' that you have thruth an rason on your side; but, Sir, you never lost a wife that you loved; an' long may you be so, I pray the heavenly Father this day! Maybe if you did, Sir, plase your honour, that, wid your heart sinkin' like a stone widin you, you'd thry whether or not *something* couldn't rise it. Sir, only for the dhrink I'd be dead."

"There I totally differ from you, Connell. The drink only prolongs your grief, by adding to it the depression of spirits which it always produces. Had you not become a drinker, you would long before this have been once more a cheerful, active, and industrious man. Your sorrow would have worn away gradually, and nothing but an agreeable melancholy—an affectionate remembrance of your excellent wife—would have remained. Look at other men."

"But where's the man, Sir, had *sich* a wife to grieve for as she was? Don't be hard on me, Sir. I'm not a dhrunkard. It's thrue I dhrink a great dale; but thin I can bear a great dale, so that I'm never incapable."

"Connell," said the lady, "you will break down your constitution, and bring yourself to an earlier death than you would otherwise meet."

"I care very little, indeed, how soon I was dead, not makin' you, Ma'am, an ill answer."

"Oh fie, Connell, for you, a sensible man and a Christian, to talk in such a manner!"

"Throth, thin, I don't, Ma'am. *She's* gone, an' I'd be glad to folly her as soon as I could. Yes, asthore, you're departed from me! an' now I'm gone asthray—out o' the right, an' out o' the good! Oh, Ma'am," he proceeded, whilst the tears rolled fast down his cheeks, "if you knew her—her last words too—Oh, she was—she was—but where's the use o' sayin' what she was?—I beg your pardon, Ma'am,—your honour, Sir, 'ill forgive my want o' manners, sure I know it's bad breedin', but I can't help it."

"Well, promise," said his landlord, "to give up drink. Indeed, I wish you would take an oath against it: you are a conscientious man, and I know would keep it, otherwise I should not propose it, for I discountenance such oaths generally. Will you promise me this, Connell?"

"I'll promise to think of it, your honour,—aginst takin' a sartin quantity, at any rate."

"If you refuse it, I'll think you are unmindful of the good feeling which we have ever shown your family."

"What?—do you think, Sir, I'm ungrateful to you? That's a sore cut, Sir, to make a villain o' me. Where's the book?—I'll swear this minute. Have you a Bible, Ma'am?—I'll show you that I'm not mane, any way."

"No, Connell, you shall not do it rashly; you must be cool and composed: but go home, and turn it in your mind," she replied; "and remember, that it is the request of me and my husband, for your own good."

"Neither must you swear before me," said his landlord, "but before Mr. Mulcahy, who, as it is an oath connected with your moral conduct, is the best person to be present. It must be voluntary, however. Now, good bye, Connell, and think of what we said; but take care never to carry home any of my servants in the same plight in which you put John Smith to-day."

"Faix thin, Sir, *he* had no business, wid your honour's livery upon his back, to begin lecthurin' me agin dhrinkin', as he did. We may all do very well, Sir, till the timptation crasses us—but that's what thries us. It thried him, but he didn't *stand* it—faix he didn't!—ha, ha, ha! Good mornin', Sir—God bless you, Ma'am! Divil resave the family in all Europe"——

"Good morning, Connell—good morning!—Pray remember what we said."

Peter, however, could not relinquish the whiskey. His sons, daughters, friends, and neighbours, all assailed him, but with no success. He either bantered them in his usual way, or reverted to his loss, and sank into sorrow. This last was the condition in which they found him most intractable; for a man is never considered to be in a state that admits of reasoning or argument, when he is known to be pressed by strong gushes of personal feeling. A plan at length struck Father Mulcahy, which he resolved to put into immediate execution.

"Peter," said he, "if you do not abandon drink, I shall stop the masses which I'm offering up for the repose of your wife's soul, and I will also return you the money I received for saying them."

This was perhaps the only point on which Peter was accessible. He felt staggered at such an unexpected intimation, and was for some time silent.

"You will then feel," added the priest, "that your drunkenness is prolonging the sufferings of your wife, and that *she* is as much concerned in your being sober, as you are yourself."

"I *will* give in," replied Peter; "I didn't see the thing in *that* light. No—I will give it up; but if I swear aginst it, you must allow me a rasonable share every day, an' I'll not go beyant it, of coorse. The thruth is, I 'd die soon if I gev it up altogether."

"We have certainly no objection against that," said the priest, "provided you keep within what would injure your health, or make you tipsy. Your drunkenness is not only sinful but disreputable; besides, you must not throw a slur upon the character of your children, who hold respectable and rising situations in the world."

"No," said Peter, in a kind of soliloquy, "I 'd lay down my life, avourneen, sooner nor I 'd cause you a minute's sufferin'. Father Mulcahy, go an wid the masses. I 'll get an oath drawn up, an' whin it 's done, I 'll swear to it. I know a man that 'll do it for me."

The priest then departed, quite satisfied with having accomplished his object; and Peter, in the course of that evening, directed his steps to the house of the village schoolmaster, for the purpose of getting him to "draw up" the intended oath.

"Misther O'Flaherty," said he, "I 'm comin' to ax a requist of you,

an' I hope you'll grant it to me. I brought down a sup in this flask, an' while we 're takin' it, we can talk over what I want."

"If it be anything widin the circumference of my power, set it down, Misther Connell, as already operated upon. I 'd drop a pen to no man at keepin' Books by Double Enthry, which is the Italian method invinted by Pope Gregory the Great. The Three Sets bear a theological ratio to the three states of a thrue Christian. 'The Waste-book,' says Pope Gregory, 'is this world, the Journal is purgatory, an' the Ledger is heaven. Or it may be compared,' he says, in the priface of the work, 'to the three states of the Catholic church—the church Militant, the church Suffering, and the church Triumphant.' The larnin' of that man was beyant the reach of credibility."

"Arra, have you a small glass, Masther? You see, Misther O'Flaherty, it's consarnin' purgatory, this that I want to talk about."

"Nancy, get us a glass—oh, here it is! Thin if it be, it 's a wrong enthry in the Journal."

"Here 's your health, Masther!—Not forgettin' you, Mrs. O'Flaherty. No, indeed, thin it 's not in the Journal, but an oath I 'm goin' to take aginst liquor."

"Nothin' is asier to post than it is. We must enter it undher the head of—let me see!—it must go in the *spirit* account, undher the head of Profit an' Loss. Your good health, Mr. Connell!—Nancy, I dhrink to your improvement in imperturbability! Yes, it must be enthered undher the"———

"Faix, undher *the rose*, I think," observed Peter; "don't you know the smack of it? You see since I tuck to it, I like the smell o' what I used to squeeze out o' the barley myself, long ago. Mr. O'Flaherty, I only want you to dhraw up an oath aginst liquor for me; but it 's not for the books, good or bad. I promised to Father Mulcahy, that I 'd do it. It 's regardin' my poor Ellish's sowl in purgatory."

"Nancy, hand me a slate an' cutter. Faith, the same 's a provident resolution; but how is it an' purgatory concatenated?"

"The priest, you see, won't go an wid the masses for her till I take the oath."

"That 's but wake logic, if you ped him for thim."

"Faix, an' I did—an' well, too;—but about the oath? Have you the pencil?"

"I have; jist lave the thing to me."

"Asy, Masther—you don't undherstand it yit. Put down two tumblers for me at home."

"How is that, Misther Connell?—It 's mysterious, if you 're about to swear *aginst* liquor!"

"I am. Put down, as I said, two tumblers for me at home.—Are they down?"

"They are down; but"———

"Asy!—very good! Put down two more for me at Dan's. Let me see!—two more behind the garden. Well!—put down one at Father Mulcahy's;—two more at Frank M'Carroll's of Kilclay. How many 's that?"

"Nine!!!"

"Very good. Now put down one wid ould Bartle Gorman, of Cargah; an' two over wid honest Roger M'Gaugy, of Nurchasey. How many have you now?"

"Twelve in all!!!!! But, Misther Connell, there's a demonstration badly wanted here: I must confiss I was always bright, but at present I'm as dark as Nox. I'd thank you for a taste of explanation."

"Asy, man alive! Is there twelve in all?"

"Twelve in all: I've calculated them."

"Well, we'll hould to that. Och, och!—I'm sure, avourneen, afore I'd let you suffer one minute's pain, I'd not scruple to take an oath aginst liquor, any way. He may go an wid the masses now for you, as soon as he likes! Mr. O'Flaherty, will you put that down on paper, an' I'll swear to it, wid a blessin', to-morrow."

"But what object do you wish to effectuate by this?"

"You see, Masther, I dhrink one day wid another from a score to two dozen tumblers, an' I want to swear to no more nor twelve in the twenty-four hours."

"Why, there's intelligibility in *that!*—Wid great pleasure, Mr. Connell, I'll indite it. Katty, tare me a lafe out o' Brian Murphy's copy there."

"You see, Masther, it's for Ellish's sake I'm doin' this. State that in the oath."

"I know it; an' well she desarved that specimen of abstinence from you, Misther Connell. Thank you!—Your health agin! an' God grant you grace an' fortitude to go through wid the same oath!—An' so he will, or I'm grievously mistaken in you."

"OATH AGAINST LIQUOR,

made by me, Cornelius O'Flaherty, Philomath, on behalf of Misther Peter Connell, of the Cross-roads, Merchant, on one part—and of the soul of Mrs. Ellish Connell, now in purgatory, Merchantess, on the other.

"I solemnly, and meritoriously, and soberly swear, that a single tumbler of whiskey punch shall not cross my lips during the twenty-four hours of the day, barring *twelve*, the locality of which is as followeth:

| | |
|---|---|
| "Imprimis—Two tumblers at home . . . . . | 2 |
| Secundo—Two more ditto at my son Dan's . . . . . | 2 |
| Tertio—Two more ditto behind my own garden . . . . . | 2 |
| Quarto—One ditto at the Reverend Father Mulcahy's . . . | 1 |
| Quinto—Two more ditto at Frank M'Carroll's, of Kilclay . . | 2 |
| Sexto—One ditto wid ould Bartle Gorman, of Cargah . . . | 1 |
| Septimo—Two more ditto wid honest Roger M'Gaugy, of Nurchasey | 2 |
| | 12 |

N.B.—I except in case any Docthor of Physic might think it right and medical to ordher me *more* for my health; or in case I could get Father Mulcahy to take the oath off of me for a start, at a wedding, or a christening, or at any other meeting of friends where there's drink.

his
Witness present, Peter X Connell.
Cornelius O'Flaherty, Philomath. mark.
*June the 4th*, 18—.

"☞ I certify that I have made and calculated this oath for Misther Pether Connell, Merchant, and that it is strictly and arithmetically proper and correct.

"Cornelius O'Flaherty, Philomath.

"*Dated this 4th day of June*, 18—."

"I think, Misther O'Flaherty, it 's a dacent oath, as it stands. Plase God I 'll swear to it some time to-morrow *evenin'*."

"Dacent! Why I don't wish to become eulogistically addicted; but I 'd back the same oath, for both grammar and arithmetic, aginst any that ever was drawn up by a lawyer—ay, by the great Counsellor himself!—but faith, I 'd not face him at a Vow, for all that; he 's the greatest man at a Vow in the three kingdoms."

"I 'll tell you what I 'm thinkin', Masther—as my hand 's in, mightn't I as well take another wid an ould frind o' mine, Owen Smith, of Lisbuy? He 's a dacent ould residenther, an' likes it. It 'll make the baker's, or the long dozen."

"Why, it 's not a bad thought; but won't thirteen get into your head?"

"No, nor three more to the back o' that. I only begin to get hearty about seventeen; so that the long dozen, afther all, is best; for God he knows, I 've a regard for Owen Smith this many a year, an' I wouldn't wish to lave him out."

"Very well—I 'll add it up to the other part of the oath.

'Octavo—One ditto out of respect for dacent Owen Smith, of Lisbuy . . 1'

Now I must make the total amount thirteen, an' all will be right."

"Masther, have you a prayer-book widin?—bekase if you have, I may as well swear it here, an' you can witness it."

"Katty, hand over the *Spiritual* Exercises—a book aquil to the Bible itself for piety an' devotion."

"Sure they say, Masther, any book that the name o' God 's in, is good for an oath. Now, wid the help o' goodness, repate the words afore me, an' I 'll sware thim."

O'Flaherty hemmed two or three times, and complied with Peter's wishes, who followed him in the words until the oath was concluded. He then kissed the book, and expressed himself much at ease, as well, he said, upon the account of Ellish's soul, as for the sake of his children.

For some time after this, his oath was the standing jest of the neighbourhood: even to this day, Peter Connell's oath against liquor is a proverb in that part of the country. Immediately after he had sworn, no one could ever perceive that he violated it in the slightest degree; indeed there could be no doubt as to his literally fulfilling it. A day never passed in which he did not punctually pay a friendly visit to those whose names were dotted down, with whom he sat, pulled out his flask, and drank his quantum. In the meantime the poor man was breaking down rapidly; so much so, that his appearance generally excited pity, if not sorrow, among his neighbours. His character became simpler every day, and his intellect evidently more exhausted. The inoffensive humour, for which he had been noted, was also completely on the wane; his eye waxed dim, his step feeble, but the benevolence of his heart never failed him. Many acts of his private generosity are well known, and still remembered with gratitude.

In proportion as the strength of his mind and constitution diminished, so did his capacity for bearing liquor. When he first bound himself by

the oath not to exceed the long dozen, such was his vigour, that the effects of thirteen tumblers could scarcely be perceived on him. This state of health, however, did not last. As he wore away, the influence of so much liquor was becoming stronger, until at length he found that it was more than he could bear, that he frequently confounded the names of the men, and the number of tumblers mentioned in the oath, and sometimes took in, in his route, persons and places not to be found in it at all. This grieved him, and he resolved to wait upon O'Flaherty for the purpose of having some means devised of guiding him during his potations.

"Masther," said he, "we must thry an' make this oath somethin' plainer. You see, whin I get confused, I'm not able to remimber things as I ought. Sometimes, instid o' one tumbler, I take two at the wrong place; an' sarra bit o' me but called in an' had three wid ould Jack Rogers, that isn't in it at all. On another day I had a couple wid honest Barny Casey, an my way acrass to Bartle Gorman's. I'm not what I was, Masther, ahagur; so I'd thank you to dhraw it out more clearer, if you can, nor it was."

"I see, Mr. Connell; I comprehend wid the greatest ase in life, the very plan for it. We must reduce the oath to Geography, for I'm at home there, bein' a Surveyor * myself. I'll lay down a map o' the parish, an' draw the houses of your friends at their proper places, so that you'll never be out o' your latitude at all."

"Faix, I doubt *that*, Masther —ha, ha, ha!" replied Peter; "I'm afeard I will, of an odd time, for I'm not able to carry what I used to do; but no matther: thry what you can do for me this time, any how. I think I could bear the long dozen still, if I didn't make mistakes."

O'Flaherty accordingly set himself to work; and as his knowledge, not only of the parish, but of every person and house in it, was accurate, he soon had a tolerably correct skeleton map of it drawn for Peter's use.

"Now," said he, "lend me your ears."

"Faix, I'll do no sich thing," replied Peter—"I know a thrick worth two of it. Lend you my ears, inagh!†—catch me at it! You have a bigger pair of your own nor I have—ha, ha, ha!"

"Well, in other words, pay attintion. Now, see this dot—that's your own house."

"Put a crass there," said Peter, "an' thin I'll know it's the Crass-roads."

"Upon my reputation, you're right; an' that's what I call a good specimen of ingenuity. I'll take the hint from that, an' we'll make it a Hieroglyphical as well as a Geographical oath. Well, there's a crass, wid two tumblers. Is that clear?"

"It is, it is! Go an."

"Now here we draw a line to your son Dan's. Let me see; he keeps a mill, an' sells cloth. Very good. I'll dhraw a mill-wheel an' a yard-wand. There's two tumblers. Will you know that?"

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* If the reader remember the advertisement in the Hedge School, he may also recollect that the Hedge masters were often employed as land-surveyors.

† Forsooth.

"I see it: go an, nothin' can be clearer. So far I can't go asthray."

"Well, what next? Two behind your own garden. What metaphor for the garden? Let me see!—let me cogitate! A dragon—the Hesperides! That's beyant *you*. A bit of a hedge will do, an' a gate."

"Don't put a gate in, it's not lucky. You know when a man takes to dhrink, they say he's goin' a grey gate, or a black gate, or a bad gate. Put that out, an' make the hedge longer, an' it 'll do—wid the two tumblers, though."

"They're down. One at the Reverend Father Mulcahy's. How will we thranslate the priest?"

"Faix, I doubt that will be a difficquilt business."

"Upon my reputation, I agree wid you in that, especially whin he repates Latin. However, we'll see. He writes P.P. afther his name; —pee-pee is what we call the turkeys wid. What 'ud you think o' two turkeys?"

"The priest would like them roasted, but I couldn't undherstand that. No; put down the sign o' the horsewhip, or the cudgel; for he's handy, an' argues well wid both?"

"Good! I'll put down the horsewhip first, an' the cudgel alongside of it; then the tumbler, an' there 'ill be the sign o' the priest."

"Ay do, Masther, an' faix the priest 'ill be complate—there can be no mistakin' him thin. Divil a one but that's a good thought!"

"There it is in black an' white. Who comes next? Frank M'Carroll. He's a farmer. I'll put down a spade an' a harrow. Well, that's done —two tumblers."

"I won't mistake that aither. It 's clear enough."

"Bartle Gorman's of Cargah. Bartle 's a little lame, an' uses a staff wid a cross on the end that he houlds in his hand. I 'll put down a staff wid a cross on it."

"Would there be no danger of me mistakin' that for the priest's cudgel?"

"Divil the slightest. I 'll pledge my knowledge of geography, they 're two very different weapons."

"Well, put it down—I 'll know it."

"Roger M'Gaugy of Nurchasy. What for him? Roger 's a pig-driver. I 'll put down a pig. You 'll comprehend that?"

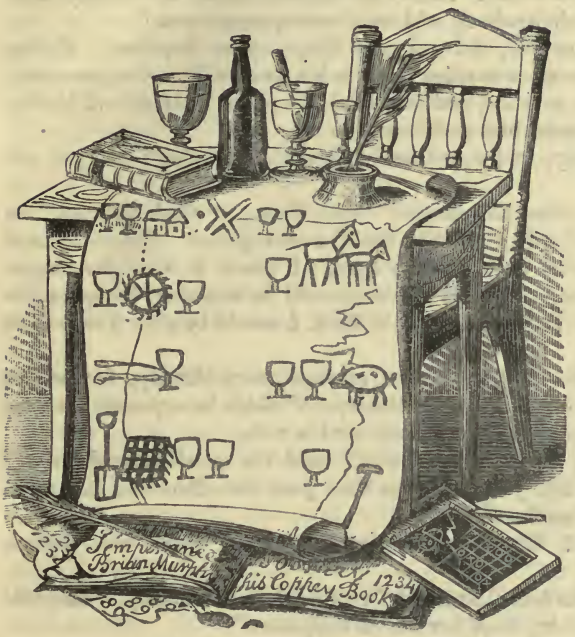
"I ought; for many a pig I sould him in my day. Put down the pig; an' if you could put two black spots upon his back, I 'd know it to be one I sould him about four years agone—the fattest ever was in the country—it had to be brought home on a car, for it wasn't able to walk wid fat."

"Very good; the spots are on it. The last is Owen Smith of Lisbuy. Now, do you see that I 've drawn a line from place to place, so that you have nothing to do only to keep to it as you go. What for Owen?"

"Owen! Let me see—Owen! Pooh! What's come over me that I 've nothing for Owen? Ay! I have it. He 's a horse-jockey: put down a grey mare I sould him about five years agone."

"I 'll put down a horse; but I can 't make a grey mare wid black ink."

"Well, make a mare of her, any way."




"Faith, an' that same puzzles me. Stop, I have it; I 'll put a foal along wid her."

"As good as the bank. God bless you, Misther O'Flaherty. I think this 'll keep me from mistakes. An' now, if you 'll slip up to me afther dusk, I 'll send you down a couple o' bottles and a flitch. Sure you desarve more for the throuble you tuck."

Many of our readers, particularly of our English readers, will be somewhat startled to hear, that, except the change of names and places, there is actually little exaggeration in the form of this oath; so just is the observation, that the romance of truth frequently far exceeds that of fiction.

Peter had, however, over-rated his own strength in supposing that he could bear the long dozen in future; ere many months passed, he was scarcely able to reach the half of that number without sinking into intoxication. Whilst in this state, he was in the habit of going to the graveyard in which his wife lay buried, where he sat, and wept like a child, sang her favourite songs, or knelt and offered up his prayers for the repose of her soul. None ever mocked him for this; on the contrary, there was always some kind person to assist him home. And as he staggered on, instead of sneers and ridicule, one might hear such expressions as these:—

"Poor Pether! he 's nearly off; an' a dacent, kind neighbour he ever was. The death of the wife broke his heart—he never riz his head since."

"Ay, poor man! God pity him! He 'll soon be sleepin' beside her, beyant there, where she 's lyin'. It was never known of Peter Connell that he offinded man, woman, or child, since he was born, barrin' the gaugers, bad luck to thim, afore he was marrid—but *that* was no offince. Sowl, he was *their* match, any how. When he an' the wife's gone, they won 't lave their likes behind them. The sons are *bodaghs*—gintlemen,

now; an' it 's nothin' but dinners an' company. Ahagur, that wasn't the way their hard-workin' father an' mother made the money that they 're houldin' their heads up wid such consequence upon."

The children, however, did not give Peter up as hopeless. Father Mulcahy, too, once more assailed him on his weak side. One morning, when he was sober, nervous, and depressed, the priest arrived, and finding him at home, addressed him as follows :—

"Peter, I 'm sorry, and vexed, and angry, this morning; and you are the cause of it."

"How is that, your Reverence?" said Peter. "God help me," he added, "don't be hard an me, Sir, for I 'm to be pitied. Don't be hard on me, for the short time I 'll be here. I know it won't be long— I 'll be wid *her* soon. Asthore machree, we'll be together, I hope, afore long— an', oh! if it was the will o' God, I would be glad it was afore night!"

The poor, shattered, heart-broken creature wept bitterly, for he felt somewhat sensible of the justice of the reproof which he expected from the priest, as well as undiminished sorrow for his wife.

"I 'm not going to be hard on you," said the good-natured priest; "I only called to tell you a dream that your son Dan had last night about you and his mother."

"About Ellish! Oh, for heaven's sake, what about her, Father, avourneen?"

"She appeared to him, last night," replied Father Mulcahy, "and told him that your drinking kept her out of happiness."

"Queen of heaven!" exclaimed Peter, deeply affected, "is that true? Oh," said he, dropping on his knees, "Father, ahagur machree, pardon me—oh, forgive me! I now promise, solemnly and seriously, to drink neither *in* the house nor *out* of it, for the time to come, not one drop at all, good, bad, or indifferent, of either whiskey, wine, or punch—*barrin' one glass.* Are you now satisfied? an' do you think she 'll get to happiness?"

"All will be well, I trust," said the priest. "I shall mention this to Dan and the rest, and depend upon it, they, too, will be happy to hear it."

"Here's what Mr. O'Flaherty an' myself made up," said Peter: "burn it, Father; take it out of my sight, for it's now no use to me."

"What is this at all?" said Mr. Mulcahy, looking into it. "Is it an oath?"

"It's the Joggraphy of one I swore some time ago; but it's now out of date—I'm done wid it."

The priest could not avoid smiling when he perused it, and on getting from Peter's lips an explanation of the hieroglyphics, he laughed heartily at the ingenious shifts they had made to guide his memory.

Peter, for some time after this, confined himself to one glass, as he had promised; but he felt such depression and feebleness, that he ventured slowly, and by degrees, to *enlarge* the "glass" from which he drank. His impression touching the happiness of his wife was, that as he had for

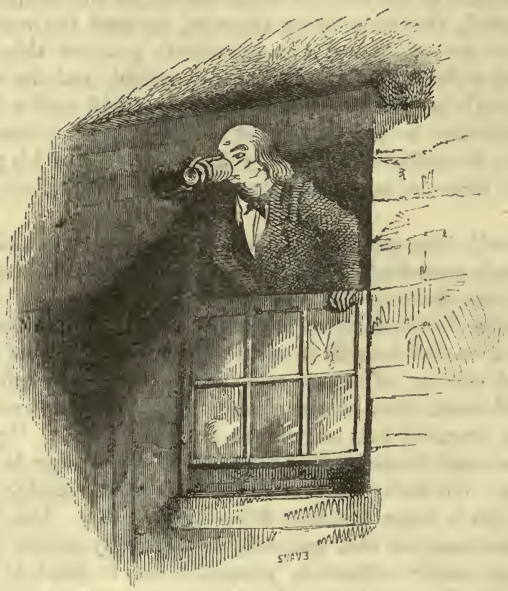
several months strictly observed his promise, she had probably during that period gone to heaven. He then began to exercise his ingenuity gradually, as we have said, by using, from time to time, a glass larger than the preceding one; thus receding from the spirit of his vow to the letter, and increasing the quantity of his drink from a small glass to the most capacious tumbler he could find. The manner in which he drank this was highly illustrative of the customs which prevail on this subject in Ireland. He remembered, that in making the vow, he used the words, "neither *in* the house nor *out* of it;" but in order to get over this dilemma, he usually stood with one foot outside the threshold, and the other in the house, keeping himself in that position which would render it difficult to determine whether he was either out or in. At other times, when he happened to be upstairs, he usually thrust one half of his person out of the window, with the same ludicrous intention of keeping the letter of his vow.

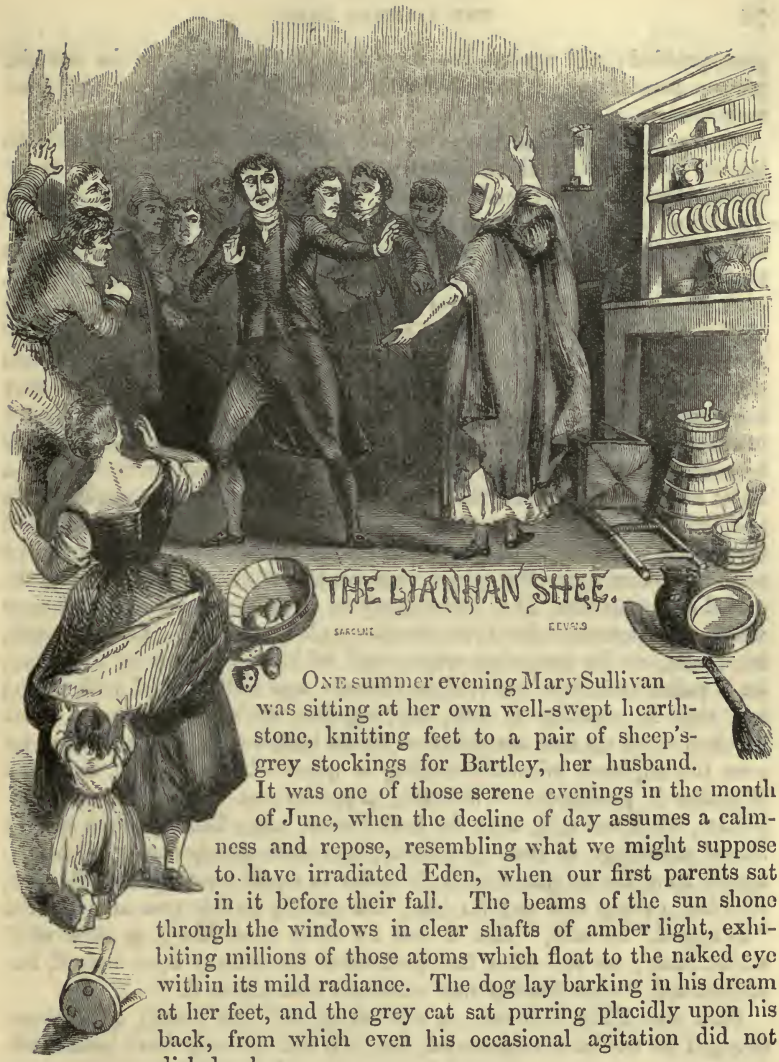
Many a smile this adroitness of his occasioned to the lookers-on; but further ridicule was checked by his wo-begone and afflicted look. He was now a mere skeleton, feeble and tottering.

One night in the depth of winter he went into the town where his two sons resided; he had been ill in mind and body during the day, and he fancied that change of scene and society might benefit him. His daughter and son-in-law, in consequence of his illness, watched him so closely, that he could not succeed in getting his usual "glass." This offended him, and he escaped without their knowledge to the son who kept the inn. On arriving there, he went up stairs, and by a *douceur* to the waiter, got a large tumbler filled with spirits. The lingering influences of a conscience that generally felt strongly on the side of moral duty, though poorly instructed, prompted him to drink it in the usual manner, by keeping one-half of his body, as nearly as he could guess, out of the window, that it might be said he drank it neither in nor out of the house. He had scarcely finished his draught, however, when he lost his balance, and was precipitated upon the pavement. The crash of his fall was heard in the bar, and his son, who had just come in, ran, along with several others, to ascertain what had happened. They found him, however, only severely stunned. He was immediately brought in, and medical aid sent for; but, though he recovered from the immediate effects of the fall, the shock it gave to his broken constitution, and his excessive grief, carried him off in a few months afterwards. He expired in the arms of his son and daughter, and amidst the tears of those who knew his simplicity of character, his goodness of heart, and his attachment to the wife by whose death that heart had been broken.

Such was the melancholy end of the honest and warm-hearted Peter Connell, who, unhappily, was not a solitary instance of a man driven to habits of intoxication and neglect of business by the force of sorrow, which time and a well-regulated mind might otherwise have overcome. We have held him up, on the one hand, as an example worthy of imitation in that industry and steadiness which, under the direction of his wife, raised him from poverty to independence and wealth; and, on the other,

as a man resorting to the use of spirituous liquors that he might be enabled to support affliction—a course which, so far from having sustained him under it, shattered his constitution, shortened his life, and destroyed his happiness. In conclusion, we wish our countrymen of Peter's class would imitate him in his better qualities, and try to avoid his failings.






One summer evening Mary Sullivan was sitting at her own well-swept hearth-stone, knitting feet to a pair of sheep's-grey stockings for Bartley, her husband. It was one of those serene evenings in the month of June, when the decline of day assumes a calmness and repose, resembling what we might suppose to have irradiated Eden, when our first parents sat in it before their fall. The beams of the sun shone through the windows in clear shafts of amber light, exhibiting millions of those atoms which float to the naked eye within its mild radiance. The dog lay barking in his dream at her feet, and the grey cat sat purring placidly upon his back, from which even his occasional agitation did not dislodge her.

Mrs. Sullivan was the wife of a wealthy farmer, and niece to the Rev. Felix O'Rourke; her kitchen was consequently large, comfortable, and warm. Over where she sat, jutted out the "brace" well lined with bacon; to the right hung a well-scoured salt-box, and to the left was the jamb, with its little gothic paneless window to admit the light. Within it hung several ash rungs, seasoning for flail-sooples, or boulteens, a dozen of eel-skins, and several stripes of horse-skin, as hangings for them. The dresser was a "parfit white," and well furnished with the usual appurtenances. Over the door and on the "threshel," were nailed, "for luck," two horse-shoes, that had been found by accident. In a little 'hole" in the wall, beneath the salt-box, lay a bottle of holy water to keep the

place purified; and against the cope-stone of the gable, on the outside, grew a large lump of house-leek, as a specific for sore eyes, and other maladies.

In the corner of the garden were a few stalks of tansy "to kill the thievin' worms in the childhre, the crathurs," together with a little Rose-noble, Solomon's Seal, and Bugloss, each for some medicinal purpose. The "lime wather" Mrs. Sullivan could make herself, and the "bog bane" for the *linh roe*,* or heart-burn, grew in their own meadow-drain; so that, in fact, she had within her reach a very decent pharmacopœia, perhaps as harmless as that of the profession itself. Lying on the top of the salt-box was a bunch of fairy flax, and sewed in the folds of her own scapular was the dust of what had once been a four-leaved shamrock, an invaluable specific "for seein' the good people," if they happened to come within the bounds of vision. Over the door in the inside, over the beds, and over the cattle in the out-houses, were placed branches of withered palm, that had been consecrated by the priest on Palm Sunday; and when the cows happened to calve, this good woman tied, with her own hands, a woollen thread about their tails, to prevent them from being overlooked by evil eyes, or *elf-shot* † by the fairies, who seem to possess a peculiar power over females of every species during the period of parturition. It is unnecessary to mention the variety of charms which she possessed for that obsolete malady the colic, for tooth-ach, head-achs, or for removing warts, and taking motes out of the eyes; let it suffice to inform our readers that she was well stocked with them; and that in addition to this, she, together with her husband, drank a potion made up and administered by an herb-doctor, for preventing for ever the slightest misunderstanding or quarrel between man and wife. Whether it produced this desirable object or not our readers may conjecture, when we add, that the herb-doctor, after having taken a very liberal advantage of their generosity, was immediately compelled to disappear from the neighbourhood, in order to avoid meeting with Bartley, who had a sharp look out for him, not exactly on his own account, but "in regard," he said, "that it had no effect upon *Mary*, at all at all;" whilst Mary, on the other hand, admitted its efficacy upon herself, but maintained, "that *Bartley* was worse nor ever afther it."

Such was Mary Sullivan, as she sat at her own hearth, quite alone, engaged as we have represented her. What she may have been meditating on we cannot pretend to ascertain; but after some time, she

* Literally, red water.

† This was, and in remote parts of the country still is, one of the strongest instances of belief in the power of the Fairies. The injury, which, if not counteracted by a charm from the lips of a "Fairy-man," or "Fairy-woman," was uniformly inflicted on the animal by what was termed an elf-stone—which was nothing more nor less than a piece of sharp flint, from three to four or five ounces in weight. The cow was supposed to be struck upon the loin with it by these mischievous little beings, and the nature of the wound was indeed said to be very peculiar—that is, it cut the midriff without making any visible or palpable wound on the outward skin. All animals dying of this complaint, were supposed to be carried to the good people, and there are many in the country who would not believe that the dead carcase of the cow was that of the real one at all, but an old log or block of wood made to resemble it. All such frauds, however, and deceptions were inexplicable to every one, but such as happened to possess a four-leafed shamrock, and this enabled its possessor to see the block or log in its real shape, although to others it appeared to be the real carcase.

looked sharply into the "backstone," or hob, with an air of anxiety and alarm. By and by she suspended her knitting, and listened with much earnestness, leaning her right ear over to the hob, from whence the sounds to which she paid such deep attention proceeded. At length she crossed herself devoutly, and exclaimed, "Queen of saints about us!—is it back ye are? Well sure there's no use in talkin', bekase they say you know what's said of you, or to you—an' we may as well spake yez fair.—Hem —musha yez are welcome back, crickets, avourneenee! I hope that, not like the last visit ye ped us, yez are comin' for luck now! Moolyeen* died, any way, soon afther your other *kailyee*,† ye crathurs ye. Here's the bread, an' the salt, an' the male for yez, an' we wish ye well. Eh? —saints above, if it isn't listenin' they are jist like a Christhien! Wurrah, but ye are the wise an' the quare crathurs all out!"

She then shook a little holy water over the hob, and muttered to herself an Irish charm or prayer against the evils which crickets are often supposed by the peasantry to bring with them, and requested, still in the words of the charm, that their presence might, on that occasion, rather be a presage of good fortune to man and beast belonging to her.

"There now, ye *dhonans*‡ ye, sure ye can't say that ye're ill-thrated here, anyhow, or ever was mocked or made game of in the same family. You have got your hansel, an' full an' plenty of it; hopin' at the same time that you'll have no rason in life to cut our best clothes from revinge. Sure an' I didn't desarve to have my brave stuff *long body* § riddled the way it was, the last time ye wor here, an' only bekase little Barny, that has but the sinse of a *gorsoon*, tould yez in a joke to pack off wid yourselves somewhere else. Musha, never heed what the likes of him says; sure he's but a *caudy*,‖ that doesn't mane ill, only the bit o' divarsion wid yez."

She then resumed her knitting, occasionally stopping, as she changed her needles, to listen, with her ear set, as if she wished to augur from the nature of their chirping, whether they came for good or evil. This, however, seemed to be beyond her faculty of translating their language; for after sagely shaking her head two or three times, she knit more busily than before.¶

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* A cow without horns. † Short visit. ‡ *Dhonan*, a diminutive delicate little thing.
§ An old-fashioned Irish gown. ‖ A little boy.

¶ Of the origin of this singular superstition I can find no account whatsoever; it is conceived, however, in a mild, sweet, and hospitable spirit. The visits of these migratory little creatures, which may be termed domestic grasshoppers, are very capricious and uncertain, as are their departures; and it is, I should think, for this reason that they are believed to be cognizant of the ongoings of human life. We can easily suppose, for instance, that the coincidence of their disappearance from a family, and the occurrence of a death in that family, frequently multiplied as such coincidences must be in the country at large, might occasion the people, who are naturally credulous, to associate the one event with the other; and on that slight basis erect the general superstition. Crickets, too, when chirupping, have a habit of suddenly ceasing, so that when any particularly interesting conversation happens to go on about the rustic hearth, this stopping of their little chaunt looks so like listening, that it is scarcely to be wondered at that the country folks think they understand every word that is spoken. They are thought, also, to foresee both good and evil, and are considered vindictive, but yet capable of being conciliated by fair words and kindness. They are also very destructive among wearing-apparel, which they frequently nibble into holes; and this is always looked upon as a piece of revenge, occasioned by some disrespectful language used towards them, or some neglect of their little wants. This note was necessary in order to render the conduct and language of Mary Sullivan perfectly intelligible.

At this moment, the shadow of a person passing the house darkened the window opposite which she sat, and immediately a tall female, of a wild dress and aspect, entered the kitchen.

"*Gho manhy dhea ghud, a ban chohr!* the blessin' o' goodness upon you, dacent woman," said Mrs. Sullivan, addressing her in those kindly phrases so peculiar to the Irish language.

Instead of making her any reply, however, the woman, whose eye glistened with a wild depth of meaning, exclaimed in low tones, apparently of much anguish, "*Husht, husht, dherum!*' husht, husht, I say—let me alone—I will do it—will you husht? I will, I say—I will—there now—that 's it—be quiet, an' I will do it—be quiet!" and as she thus spoke, she turned her face back over her left shoulder, as if some invisible being dogged her steps, and stood bending over her.

"*Gho manhy dhea ghud, a ban chohr, dherhum areesht!* the blessin' o' God on you, honest woman, I say again," said Mrs. Sullivan, repeating that *sacred* form of salutation with which the peasantry address each other. "'Tis a fine evenin', honest woman, glory be to him that sent the same, and amin! If it was cowld, I'd be axin' you to draw your chair in to the fire; but, any way, won't you sit down?"

As she ceased speaking the piercing eye of the strange woman became rivetted on her with a glare, which, whilst it startled Mrs. Sullivan, seemed full of an agony that almost abstracted her from external life. It was not, however, so wholly absorbing as to prevent it from expressing a marked interest, whether for good or evil, in the woman who addressed her so hospitably.

"Husht, now—husht," she said, as if aside—"husht, won't you—sure I may speak *the thing* to her—you said it—there now, husht!" And then fastening her dark eyes on Mrs. Sullivan, she smiled bitterly and mysteriously.

"I know you well," she said, without, however, returning the *blessing* contained in the usual reply to Mrs. Sullivan's salutation—"I know you well, Mary Sullivan—husht, now, husht—yes, I know you well, and the power of all that you carry about you; but you'd be better than you are—and that's well enough *now*—if you had sense to know—ah, ah, ah!—what 's this!" she exclaimed abruptly, with three distinct shrieks, that seemed to be produced by sensations of sharp and piercing agony.

"In the name of goodness, what 's over you, honest woman?" inquired Mrs. Sullivan, as she started from her chair, and ran to her in a state of alarm, bordering on terror—"Is it sick you are?"

The woman's face had got haggard, and its features distorted; but in a few minutes they resumed their peculiar expression of settled wildness and mystery. "Sick!" she replied, licking her parched lips, "*awirck, awirck!* look! look!" and she pointed with a shudder that almost convulsed her whole frame, to a lump that rose on her shoulders; this, be it what it might, was covered with a red cloak, closely pinned and tied with great caution about her body—"'tis here!—I have it!"

"Blessed mother!" exclaimed Mrs. Sullivan, tottering over to her chair, as finished a picture of horror as the eye could witness, "this day 's Friday: the saints stand betwixt me an' all harm! Oh, holy Mary, protect me! *Nhanim an airh,*" in the name of the Father, &c., and she forthwith

proceeded to bless herself, which she did thirteen times in honour of the blessed virgin and the twelve apostles.

"Ay, it 's as you see!" replied the stranger, bitterly. "It is here—husht, now—husht, I say—I will say *the thing* to her, mayn't I? Ay, indeed, Mary Sullivan, 'tis with me always—always. Well, well, no, I won't, I won't—easy. Oh, blessed saints, easy, and I won't!"

In the meantime Mrs. Sullivan had uncorked her bottle of holy water, and plentifully bedewed herself with it, as a preservative against this mysterious woman and her dreadful secret.

"Blessed mother above!" she ejaculated, "the *Lianhan Shee!*" And as she spoke, with the holy water in the palm of her hand, she advanced cautiously, and with great terror, to throw it upon the stranger and the unearthly thing she bore.

"Don't attempt it!" shouted the other, in tones of mingled fierceness and terror; "do you want to give *me* pain without keeping *yourself* anything at all safer? Don't you know *it* doesn't care about your holy water? But I'd suffer for it, an' perhaps so would you."

Mrs. Sullivan, terrified by the agitated looks of the woman, drew back with affright, and threw the holy water with which she intended to purify the other on her own person.

"Why thin, you lost crathur, who or what are you at all?—don't, don't—for the sake of all the saints and angels of heaven, don't come next or near me—keep your distance—but what are you, or how did you come to get that 'good thing' you carry about wid you?"

"Ay, indeed!" replied the woman bitterly, "as if I would or could tell you that! I say, you woman, you 're doing what's not right in asking me a question you ought not let to cross your lips—look to yourself, and what's over you."

The simple woman, thinking her meaning literal, almost leaped off her seat with terror, and turned up her eyes to ascertain whether or not any dreadful appearance had approached her, or hung over her where she sat.

"Woman," said she, "I spoke you kind an' fair, an' I wish you well—but——"

"But what?" replied the other—and her eyes kindled into deep and profound excitement, apparently upon very slight grounds.

"Why—hem—nothin' at all sure, only"——

"Only what?" asked the stranger, with a face of anguish that seemed to torture every feature out of its proper lineaments.

"Dacent woman," said Mrs. Sullivan, whilst the hair began to stand with terror upon her head, "sure it 's no wondher in life that I 'm in a perplexity, whin a *Lianhan Shee* is undher the one roof wid me. 'Tisn't that I want to know anything at all about it—the dear forbid I should; but I never hard of a person bein' tormented wid it as you are. I always used to hear the people say that it thrated its friends well."

"Husht!" said the woman, looking wildly over her shoulder, "I 'll not tell: it 's on myself I 'll leave the blame! Why, will you never pity me? Am I to be night and day tormented? Oh, you 're wicked and cruel for no reason!"

"Thry," said Mrs. Sullivan, "an' bless yourself; call on God."

"Ah!" shouted the other, "are you going to get me killed?" and as she uttered the words, a spasmodic working which must have occasioned great pain, even to torture, became audible in her throat: her bosom heaved up and down, and her head was bent repeatedly on her breast, as if by force.

"Don't mention that name," said she, "in my presence, except you mean to drive me to utter distraction. I mean," she continued, after considerable effort to recover her former tone and manner—"hear me with attention—I mean, woman—you, Mary Sullivan—that if you mention that holy name, you might as well keep plunging sharp knives into my heart! Husht! peace to me for one minute, tormentor! Spare me something, I 'm in your power!"

"Will you ate anything?" said Mrs. Sullivan; "poor crathur, you look like hunger an' distress; there 's enough in the house, blessed be them that sent it! an' you had betther thry an' take some nourishment, any way;" and she raised her eyes in a silent prayer of relief and ease for the unhappy woman, whose unhallowed association had, in her opinion, sealed her doom.

"Will I?—will I?—oh!" she replied, "may you never know misery for offering it! Oh, bring me something—some refreshment—some food—for I 'm dying with hunger."

Mrs. Sullivan, who, with all her superstition, was remarkable for charity and benevolence, immediately placed food and drink before her, which the stranger absolutely devoured—taking care occasionally to secrete under the protuberance which appeared behind her neck, a portion of what she ate. This, however, she did, not by stealth, but openly; merely taking means to prevent the concealed thing, from being, by any possible accident, discovered.

When the craving of hunger was satisfied, she appeared to suffer less from the persecution of her tormentor than before; whether it was, as Mrs. Sullivan thought, that the food with which she plied it, appeased in some degree its irritability, or lessened that of the stranger, it was difficult to say; at all events, she became more composed; her eyes resumed somewhat of a natural expression; each sharp ferocious glare, which shot from them with such intense and rapid flashes, partially disappeared; her knit brows dilated, and part of a forehead, which had once been capacious and handsome, lost the contractions which deformed it by deep wrinkles. Altogether the change was evident, and very much relieved Mrs. Sullivan, who could not avoid observing it.

"It 's not that I care much about it, if you 'd think it not right o' me, but it 's odd enough for you to keep the lower part of your face muffled up in that black cloth, an' then your forehead, too, is covered down on your face a bit? If they 're part of the *bargain*,"—and she shuddered at the thought—"between you an' anything that 's not good—hem!—I think you 'd do well to throw thim off o' you, an' turn to thim that can protect you from everything that 's bad. Now a scapular would keep all the divils in hell from one; an' if you 'd"——

On looking at the stranger she hesitated, for the wild expression of her eyes began to return.

"Don't begin my punishment again," replied the woman; "make no

allus—don't make mention in my presence of anything that 's good. Husht,—husht—it 's beginning—easy now—easy! No," said she, "I came to tell you, that only for my breaking a vow I made to this thing upon me, I 'd be happy instead of miserable with it. I say, it 's a good thing to have, if the person will use this bottle," she added, producing one, "as I will direct them."

"I wouldn 't wish, for my part," replied Mrs. Sullivan, "to have anything to do wid it—neither act nor part;" and she crossed herself devoutly, on contemplating such an unholy alliance as that at which her companion hinted.

"Mary Sullivan," replied the other, "I can put good fortune and happiness in the way of you and yours. It is for you the good is intended; if *you* don't get both, *no other* can," and her eyes kindled as she spoke like those of the Pythoness in the moment of inspiration.

Mrs. Sullivan looked at her with awe, fear, and a strong mixture of curiosity; she had often heard that the *Lianhan Shee* had, through means of the person to whom it was bound, conferred wealth upon several, although it could never render this important service to those who exercised direct authority over it. She therefore experienced something like a conflict between her fears and a love of that wealth, the possession of which was so plainly intimated to her.

"The money," said she, "would be one thing, but to have the *Lianhan Shee* planted over a body's shouldher—och! the saints preserve us!—no, not for oceans of hard goold would I have it in my company one minnit. But in regard to the money—hem!—why, if it could be managed widout havin' act or part wid *that thing*, people would do anything in rason and fairity."

"You have this day been kind to me," replied the woman, "and that 's what I can 't say of many—dear help me!—husht! Every door is shut in my face! Does not every cheek get pale when I am seen? If I meet a fellow-creature on the road, they turn into the field to avoid me; if I ask for food, it 's to a deaf ear I speak; if I am thirsty, they send me to the river. What house would shelter me? In cold, in hunger, in drought, in storm, and in tempest, I am alone and unfriended, hated, feared, an' avoided; starving in the winter's cold, and burning in the summer's heat. All this is my fate here; and—oh! oh! oh!—have mercy, tormentor—have mercy! I will not lift my thoughts *there*—I'll keep the paction—but spare me *now!*"

She turned round as she spoke, seeming to follow an invisible object, or, perhaps, attempting to get a more complete view of the mysterious being which exercised such a terrible and painful influence over her. Mrs. Sullivan, also, kept her eye fixed upon the lump, and actually believed that she saw it move. Fear of incurring the displeasure of what it contained, and a superstitious reluctance harshly to thrust a person from her door who had eaten of her food, prevented her from desiring the woman to depart.

"In the name of Goodness," she replied, "I will have nothing to do wid your gift. Providence, blessed be his name, has done well for me an'

mine; an' it mightn't be right to go beyant what it has pleased *him* to give me."

"A rational sentiment!—I mean there's good sense in what you say," answered the stranger: "but you need not be afraid," and she accompanied the expression by holding up the bottle and kneeling: "now," she added, "listen to me, and judge for yourself, if what I say, when I swear it, can be a lie." She then proceeded to utter oaths of the most solemn nature, the purport of which was to assure Mrs. Sullivan that drinking of the bottle would be attended with no danger.

"You see this little bottle, drink it. Oh, for my sake and your own, drink it; it will give wealth without end, to you, and to all belonging to you. Take one-half of it before sun-rise, and the other half when he goes down. You must stand while drinking it, with your face to the east, in the morning; and at night, to the west. Will you promise to do this?"

"How would drinkin' the bottle get me money?" inquired Mrs. Sullivan, who certainly felt a strong tendency of heart to the wealth.

"That I can't tell you now, nor would you understand it, even if I could; but you will know all when what I say is complied with."

"Keep your bottle, dacent woman. I wash my hands out of it: the saints above guard me from the timptation! I'm sure it's not right, for as I'm a sinner, 'tis gettin' stronger every minute widin me? Keep it! I'm loth to bid any one that *ett* o' my bread to go from my hearth, but if you go, I'll make it worth your while. Saints above, what's comin' over me. In my whole life I never had such a hankerin' afther money! Well, well, but it's quare entirely!"

"Will you drink it!" asked her companion. "If it does hurt or harm to you or yours, or anything but good, may what is hanging over me be fulfilled!" and she extended a thin, but, considering her years, not ungraceful arm, in the act of holding out the bottle to her kind entertainer.

"For the sake of all that's good and gracious take it without scruple—it is not hurtful, a child might drink every drop that's in it. Oh, for the sake of all you love, and of all that love you, take it!" and as she urged her, the tears streamed down her cheeks.

"No, no," replied Mrs. Sullivan, "it'll never cross my lips; not if it made me as rich as ould Hendherson, that airs his guineas in the sun, for fraid they'd get light by lyin' past."

"I entreat you to take it?" said the strange woman.

"Never, never!—once for all—I say, I won't; so spare your breath."

The firmness of the good housewife was not, in fact, to be shaken; so, after exhausting all the motives and arguments with which she could urge the accomplishment of her design, the strange woman, having again put the bottle into her bosom, prepared to depart.

She had now once more become calm, and resumed her seat with the languid air of one who has suffered much exhaustion and excitement. She put her hand upon her forehead for a few moments, as if collecting her faculties, or endeavouring to remember the purport of their previous conversation. A slight moisture had broken through her skin, and altogether, notwithstanding her avowed criminality in entering into an unholy bond, she appeared an object of deep compassion.

"You see this little bottle, drink it"

*The Lanham Sheet, page 92.*

In a moment, her manner changed again, and her eyes blazed out once more, as she asked her alarmed hostess :—

" Again, Mary Sullivan, will you take the gift that I have it in my power to give you? ay or no? speak, poor mortal, if you know what is for your own good?"

Mrs. Sullivan's fears, however, had overcome her love of money, particularly as she thought that wealth obtained in such a manner could not prosper; her only objection being to the means of acquiring it.

" Oh!" said the stranger, " am I doomed never to meet with any one who will take the promise off me by drinking of this bottle. Oh! but I am unhappy! What it is to fear—ah! ah!—and keep *his* commandments. Had *I* done so in my youthful time, I wouldn't now—ah—merciful mother, is there no relief? kill me, tormentor; kill me outright, for surely the pangs of eternity cannot be greater than those you now make me suffer. Woman," said she, and her muscles stood out in extraordinary energy—" woman, Mary Sullivan—ay, if you should kill me—blast me—where I stand, I will say the word—woman—you have daughters—teach them—to fear—" Having got so far, she stopped—her bosom heaved up and down—her frame shook dreadfully—her eyeballs became lurid and fiery—her hands were clenched, and the spasmodic throes of inward convulsion worked the white froth up to her mouth; at length she suddenly became like a statue, with this wild supernatural expression intense upon her, and with an awful calmness, by far more dreadful than excitement could be, concluded by pronouncing in deep husky tones, the name of God.

Having accomplished this with such a powerful struggle, she turned round with pale despair in her countenance and manner, and with streaming eyes slowly departed, leaving Mrs. Sullivan in a situation not at all to be envied.

In a short time the other members of the family, who had been out at their evening employments, returned. Bartley, her husband, having entered somewhat sooner than his three daughters from milking, was the first to come in; presently the girls followed, and in a few minutes they sat down to supper, together with the servants, who dropped in one by one, after the toil of the day. On placing themselves about the table, Bartley as usual took his seat at the head; but Mrs. Sullivan, instead of occupying hers, sat at the fire in a state of uncommon agitation. Every two or three minutes she would cross herself devoutly, and mutter such prayers against spiritual influences of an evil nature, as she could compose herself to remember.

" Thin, why don't you come to your supper, Mary," said the husband, " while the sowans are warm? Brave and thick they are this night, any way."

His wife was silent, for so strong a hold had the strange woman and her appalling secret upon her mind, that it was not till he repeated his question three or four times—raising his head with surprise, and asking, " Eh, thin Mary, what's come over you—is it unwell you are?"—that she noticed what he said.

" Supper!" she exclaimed, " unwell! 'tis a good right I have to be

unwell,—I hope nothin' bad will happen, any way. Feel my face, Nannie," she added, addressing one of her daughters, "it's as cowld an' wet as a lime-stone—ay, an' if you found me a corpse before you, it wouldn't be at all strange."

There was a general pause at the seriousness of this intimation. The husband rose from his supper, and went up to the hearth where she sat.

"Turn round to the light," said he; "why, Mary dear, in the name of wondher, what ails you? for you're like a corpse sure enough. Can't you tell us what has happened, or what put you in such a state? Why, childhre, the cowld sweat's teemin' off her!"

The poor woman, unable to sustain the shock produced by her interview with the stranger, found herself getting more weak, and requested a drink of water; but before it could be put to her lips, she laid her head upon the back of the chair and fainted. Grief, and uproar, and confusion, followed this alarming incident. The presence of mind, so necessary on such occasions, was wholly lost; one ran here, and another there, all jostling against each other, without being cool enough to render her proper assistance. The daughters were in tears, and Bartley himself was dreadfully shocked by seeing his wife apparently lifeless before him.

She soon recovered, however, and relieved them from the apprehension of her death, which they thought had actually taken place. "Mary," said the husband, "something quare entirely has happened, or you wouldn't be in this state!"

"Did any of you see a strange woman lavin' the house, a minute or two before ye came in?" she inquired.

"No," they replied, "not a stim of any one did we see."

"Wurrah dheelish! No?—now is it possible ye didn't?" She then described her, but all declared they had seen no such person.

"Bartley, whisper," said she, and beckoning him over to her, in few words she revealed the secret. The husband grew pale and crossed himself. "Mother of Saints! childhre," said he, "a *Lianhan Shee!*" The words were no sooner uttered, than every countenance assumed the pallidness of death; and every right hand was raised in the act of blessing the person, and crossing the forehead. "*The Lianhan Shee!!*" all exclaimed in fear and horror—"This day's Friday, God betwixt us an' harm!*"

It was now after dusk, and the hour had already deepened into the darkness of a calm, moonless, summer night; the hearth, therefore, in a short time, became surrounded by a circle, consisting of every person in the house; the door was closed and securely bolted;—a struggle for the safest seat took place; and to Bartley's shame be it spoken, he lodged himself on the hob within the jamb, as the most distant situation from the fearful being known as the *Lianhan Shee.* The recent terror, however, brooded over them all; their topic of conversation was the mysterious visit, of which Mrs. Sullivan gave a painfully accurate detail; whilst every ear of those who composed her audience was set, and every single

* This short form is supposed to be a safeguard against the Fairies. The particular day must be always named.

hair of their heads bristled up, as if awakened into distinct life by the story. Bartley looked into the fire soberly, except when the cat, in prowling about the dresser, electrified him into a start of fear, which sensation went round every link of the living chain about the hearth.

The next day the story spread through the whole neighbourhood, accumulating in interest and incident as it went. Where it received the touches, embellishments, and emendations, with which it was amplified, it would be difficult to say; every one told it, forsooth, *exactly* as he heard it from another; but indeed it is not improbable, that those through whom it passed, were unconscious of the additions it had received at their hands. It is not unreasonable to suppose, that imagination in such cases often colours highly without a premeditated design of falsehood. Fear and dread, however, accompanied its progress; such families as had neglected to keep holy water in their houses borrowed some from their neighbours; every old prayer which had become rusty from disuse, was brightened up—charms were hung about the necks of cattle—and gospels about those of children—crosses were placed over the doors and windows; —no unclean water was thrown out before sun-rise or after dusk—

"E'en those prayed now who never prayed before,
And those who always prayed, still prayed the more."

The inscrutable woman who caused such general dismay in the parish, was an object of much pity. Avoided, feared, and detested, she could find no rest for her weary feet, nor any shelter for her unprotected head: If she was seen approaching a house, the door and windows were immediately closed against her; if met on the way she was avoided as a pestilence. How she lived no one could tell, for none would permit themselves to know. It was asserted that she existed without meat or drink, and that she was doomed to remain possessed of life, the prey of hunger and thirst, until she could get some one weak enough to break the spell by drinking her hellish draught, to taste which, they said, would be to change places with herself, and assume her despair and misery.

There had lived in the country about six months before her appearance in it, a man named Stephenson. He was unmarried, and the last of his family. This person led a solitary and secluded life, and exhibited during the last years of his existence strong symptoms of eccentricity, which for some months before his death, assumed a character of unquestionable derangement. He was found one morning hanging by a halter in his own stable, where he had, under the influence of his malady, committed suicide. At this time the public press had not, as now, familiarised the minds of the people to that dreadful crime, and it was consequently looked upon *then* with an intensity of horror, of which we can scarcely entertain any adequate notion. His farm remained unoccupied, for while an acre of land could be obtained in any other quarter, no man would enter upon such unhallowed premises. The house was locked up, and it was currently reported that Stephenson and the devil each night repeated the hanging scene in the stable; and that when the former was committing the "hopeless sin," the halter slipped several times from the beam of the stable-loft, when Satan came, in the shape of a dark-complexioned man

with a hollow voice, and secured the rope until Stephenson's end was accomplished.

In this stable did the wanderer take up her residence at night; and when we consider the belief of the people in the night-scenes which were supposed to occur in it, we need not be surprised at the new feature of horror which this circumstance superadded to her character. Her presence and appearance in the parish were dreadful; a public outcry was soon raised against her, which, were it not from fear of her power over their lives and cattle, might have ended in her death. None, however, had courage to grapple with her, or to attempt expelling her by violence, lest a signal vengeance might be taken on any who dared to injure a woman that could call in the terrible aid of the *Lianhan Shee*.

In this state of feeling they applied to the parish priest, who, on hearing the marvellous stories related concerning her, and on questioning each man closely upon his authority, could perceive, that, like most other reports, they were to be traced principally to the imagination and fears of the people. He ascertained, however, enough from Bartley Sullivan to justify a belief that there was something certainly uncommon about the woman; and being of a cold, phlegmatic disposition, with some humour, he desired them to go home, if they were wise—he shook his head mysteriously as he spoke—"and do the woman no injury, if they didn't wish"—and with this abrupt hint he sent them about their business.

This, however, did not satisfy them. In the same parish lived a suspended priest, called Father Philip O'Dallaghy, who supported himself, as most of them do, by curing certain diseases of the people—miraculously! He had no other means of subsistence, nor, indeed, did he seem strongly devoted to life, or to the pleasures it afforded. He was not addicted to those intemperate habits which characterise "Blessed Priests" in general; spirits he never tasted, nor any food that could be termed a luxury, or even a comfort. His communion with the people was brief, and marked by a tone of severe contemptuous misanthropy. He seldom stirred abroad except during morning, or in the evening twilight, when he might be seen gliding amidst the coming darkness, like a dissatisfied spirit. His life was an austere one, and his devotional practices were said to be of the most remorseful character. Such a man, in fact, was calculated to hold a powerful sway over the prejudices and superstitions of the people. This was true. His power was considered almost unlimited, and his life one that would not disgrace the highest saint in the calendar. There were not wanting some persons in the parish who hinted that Father Felix O'Rourke, the parish priest, was himself rather reluctant to incur the displeasure, or challenge the power of the *Lianhan Shee*, by driving its victim out of the parish. The opinion of these persons was, in its distinct unvarnished reality, that Father Felix absolutely showed the white feather on this critical occasion—that he became shy, and begged leave to decline being introduced to this intractable pair—seeming to intimate that he did not at all relish adding them to the stock of his acquaintances.

Father Philip they considered as a decided contrast to him on this point. His stern and severe manner, rugged, and, when occasion demanded, daring, they believed suitable to the qualities requisite for sus-

taining such an interview. They accordingly waited on him; and after Bartley and his friends had given as faithful a report of the circumstances as, considering all things, could be expected, he told Bartley he would hear from Mrs. Sullivan's own lips the authentic narrative. This was quite satisfactory, and what was expected from him. As for himself, he appeared to take no particular interest in the matter, further than that of allaying the ferment and alarm which had spread through the parish.

"Plase your Reverence," said Bartley, "she came in to Mary, and she alone in the house, and for the matther o' that, I believe she laid hands upon her, and tossed and tumbled the crathur, and she but a sickly woman, through the four corners of the house. Not that Mary lets an so much, for she's afeard; but I know from her way, when she spakes about her, that it's thruth, your Reverence."

"But didn't the *Lianhan Shee*," said one of them, "put a sharp-pointed knife to her breast, wid a divilish intintion of makin' her give the best of atin' an' dhrinkin' the house afforded?"

"She got the victuals, to a sartinty," replied Bartley, "and 'overlooked' my woman for her pains; for she's not the picture of herself since."

Every one now told some magnified and terrible circumstance, illustrating the formidable power of the Lianhan Shee.

When they had finished, the sarcastic lip of the priest curled into an expression of irony and contempt; his brow which was naturally black and heavy, darkened; and a keen, but rather a ferocious-looking eye, shot forth a glance, which, while it intimated disdain for those to whom it was directed, spoke also of a dark and troubled spirit in himself. The man seemed to brook with scorn the degrading situation of a religious quack, to which some incontrollable destiny had doomed him.

"I shall see your wife to-morrow," said he to Bartley; "and after hearing the plain account of what happened, I will consider what is best to be done with this dark, perhaps unhappy, perhaps guilty character; but whether dark, or unhappy, or guilty, I, for one, should not, and will not, avoid her. Go, and bring me word to-morrow evening, when I can see her on the following day. Begone!"

When they withdrew, Father Philip paced his room for some time in silence and anxiety.

"Ay," said he, "infatuated people! sunk in superstition and ignorance, yet, perhaps, happier in your degradation than those who, in the pride of knowledge, can only look back upon a life of crime and misery. What is a sceptic? What is an infidel? Men who, when they will not submit to moral restraint, harden themselves into scepticism and infidelity, until, in the headlong career of guilt, that which was first adopted to lull the outcry of conscience, is supported by the pretended pride of principle. Principle in a sceptic! Hollow and devilish lie! Would *I* have plunged into scepticism, had I not first violated the moral sanctions of religion? Never. I became an infidel, because I first became a villain! Writhing under a load of guilt, that which I wished might be true, I soon forced myself to think true: and now"—he here clenched his hands and groaned —"now—ay, now—and hereafter—oh, *that* hereafter! Why can I not

shake the thoughts of it from my conscience? Religion! Christianity! With all the hardness of an infidel's heart, I feel your truth; because, if every man were the villain that infidelity would make him, then indeed might every man curse God for the existence bestowed upon him—as I would, but dare not do. Yet why can I not believe?—Alas! why should God accept an unrepentant heart? Am I not a hypocrite, mocking him by a guilty pretension to his power, and leading the dark into thicker darkness? Then these hands—blood!—broken vows!—ha! ha! ha! Well, go—let misery have its laugh, like the light that breaks from the thunder-cloud. Prefer Voltaire to Christ; sow the wind, and reap the whirlwind, as I have done—ha, ha, ha! Swim, world—swim about me! I have lost the ways of Providence, and am dark! *She* awaits me; but I broke the chain that galled us: yet it still rankles—still rankles!"

The unhappy man threw himself into a chair in a paroxysm of frenzied agony. For more than an hour he sat in the same posture, until he became gradually hardened into a stiff, lethargic insensibility, callous and impervious to feeling, reason, or religion—an awful transition from a visitation of conscience so terrible as that which he had just suffered. At length he arose, and by walking moodily about, relapsed into his usual gloomy and restless character.

When Bartley went home, he communicated to his wife Father Philip's intention of calling on the following day, to hear a correct account of the *Lianhan Shee.*

"Why, thin," said she, "I'm glad of it, for I intinded myself to go to him, any way, to get my new scapular consecrated. How-an'-ever, as he's to come, I'll get a set of gospels for the boys an' girls, an' he can consecrate all when his hand's in. Aroon, Bartley, they say that man's so holy that he can do anything—ay, melt a body off the face o' the earth, like snow off a ditch. Dear me, but the power they have is strange all out!"

"There's no use in gettin' him anything to ate or dhrink," replied Bartley; "he wouldn't take a glass o' whiskey once in seven years. Throth, myself thinks he's a little too dhry; sure he might be holy enough, an' yet take a sup of an odd time. There's Father Felix, an' though we all know he's far from bein' so blessed a man as him, yet he has friendship an' neighbourliness in him, an' never refuses a glass in rason."

"But do you know what I was tould about Father Philip, Bartley?"

"I'll tell you that afther I hear it, Mary, my woman; you won't expect me to tell what I don't know?—ha, ha, ha!"

"Behave, Bartley, an' quit your jokin' now, at all evints; keep it till we're talkin' of somethin' else, an' don't let us be committin' sin, maybe, while we're spakin' of what we're spakin' about; but they say it's as thrue as the sun to the dial:—the Lent afore last itself it was,—he never tasted mate or dhrink durin' the whole seven weeks! Oh, you needn't stare! it's well known by thim that has as much sinse as you—no, not so much as you'd carry on the point o' this knittin'-needle. Well, sure the housekeeper an' the two sarvants wondhered—faix, they couldn't do less—an' took it into their heads to watch him closely; an' what do you think—blessed be all the saints above!—what do you think they *seen?*"

"The Goodness above knows; for me—I don't."

"Why, thin, whin he was asleep they seen a small silk thread in his mouth, that came down through the ceilin' from heaven, an' he suckin' it, just as a child would his mother's breast whin the crathur 'ud be asleep: so that was the way he was supported by the angels! An' I remimber myself, though he's a dark, spare, yallow man at all times, yet he never looked half so fat an' rosy as he did the same Lent!"

"Glory be to Heaven! Well, well—*it is* sthrange the power they have! As for him, I'd as *lee* meet St. Pether, or St. Pathrick himself, as him; for one can't but fear him, somehow."

"Fear him! Och, it 'ud be the pity o' thim that 'ud do anything to vex or anger that man. Why, his very look 'ud wither thim, till there wouldn't be the thrack* o' thim on the earth; an' as for his curse, why it 'ud scorch thim to ashes!"

As it was generally known that Father Philip was to visit Mrs. Sullivan the next day, in order to hear an account of the mystery which filled the parish with such fear, a very great number of the parishioners were assembled in and about Bartley's long before he made his appearance. At length he was seen walking slowly down the road, with an open book in his hand, on the pages of which he looked from time to time. When he approached the house, those who were standing about it assembled in a body, and, with one consent, uncovered their heads, and asked his blessing. His appearance bespoke a mind ill at ease; his face was haggard, and his eyes blood-shot. On seeing the people kneel, he smiled with his usual bitterness, and, shaking his hand with an air of impatience over them, muttered some words, rather in mockery of the ceremony than otherwise. They then rose, and blessing themselves, put on their hats, rubbed the dust off their knees, and appeared to think themselves recruited by a peculiar accession of grace.

On entering the house the same form was repeated; and when it was over, the best chair was placed for him by Mary's own hands, and the fire stirred up, and a line of respect drawn, within which none was to intrude, lest he might feel in any degree incommoded.

"My good neighbour," said he to Mrs. Sullivan, "what strange woman is this, who has thrown the parish into such a ferment? I'm told she paid you a visit? Pray sit down."

"I humbly thank your Reverence," said Mary, curtseying lowly, "but I'd rather not sit, Sir, if you plase. I hope I know what respect manes, your Reverence. Barny Bradagh, I'll thank you to stand up, if you plase, an' his Reverence to the fore, Barny."

"I ax your Reverence's pardon, an' yours, too, Mrs. Sullivan: sure we didn't mane the disrespect, any how, Sir, plase your Reverence."

"About this woman, and the *Lianhan Shee?*" said the priest, without noticing Barny's apology. "Pray what do you precisely understand by a *Lianhan Shee?*"

"Why, Sir," replied Mary, "some sthrange bein' from the good people, or fairies, that sticks to some persons. There 's a bargain, Sir, your

* Track, foot-mark, put for life.

Reverence, made atween thim; an' the divil, Sir, that is, the ould boy—the saints about us!—has a hand in it. The *Lianhan Shee*, your Reverence, is never seen only by thim it keeps wid; but—hem!—it always, wid the help of the ould boy, conthrives, Sir, to make the person brake the agreement, an' thin it has *thim* in *its* power; but if they *don't* brake the agreement, thin *it's* in *their* power. If they can get any body to put in their place, they may get out o' the bargain; for they can, of a sartainty, give oceans o' money to people, but can't take any themselves, plase your Reverence. But sure, where's the use o' me to be tellin' your Reverence what you know betther nor myself?—an' why shouldn't you, or any one that has the power you have?"

He smiled again at this in his own peculiar manner, and was proceeding to inquire more particularly into the nature of the interview between them, when the noise of feet, and sounds of general alarm, accompanied by a rush of people into the house, arrested his attention, and he hastily inquired into the cause of the commotion. Before he could receive a reply, however, the house was almost crowded; and it was not without considerable difficulty that, by the exertions of Mrs. Sullivan and Bartley, sufficient order and quiet were obtained to hear distinctly what was said.

"Plase your Reverence," said several voices at once, "they 're comin', hot-foot, into the very house to us! Was ever the likes seen! an' they must know right well, Sir, that you 're widin in it."

"Who are coming?" he inquired.

"Why the woman, Sir, an' her *good pet*, the *Lianhan Shee*, your Reverence."

"Well," said he, "but why should you all appear so blanched with terror? Let her come in, and we shall see how far she is capable of injuring her fellow-creatures: some maniac," he muttered, in a low soliloquy, "whom the villany of the world has driven into derangement—some victim to a hand like m——. Well, they say there *is* a Providence, yet such things are permitted!"

"He 's sayin' a prayer now," observed one of them; "haven't we a good right to be thankful that he 's in the place wid us while she 's in it, or dear knows what harm she might do us—maybe *rise* the wind!"*

As the latter speaker concluded, there was a dead silence. The persons about the door crushed each other backwards, their feet set out before them, and their shoulders laid with violent pressure against those who stood behind, for each felt anxious to avoid all danger of contact with a being against whose power even a blessed priest found it necessary to guard himself by a prayer.

At length a low murmur ran among the people—"Father O'Rourke!—here 's Father O'Rourke!—he has turned the corner after her, an' they 're both comin' in." Immediately they entered, but it was quite evident from the manner of the worthy priest, that he was unacquainted with the person of this singular being. When they crossed the threshold,

* It is generally supposed by the people, that persons who have entered into a compact with Satan can raise the wind by calling him up, and that it cannot be laid unless by the death of a black cock, a black dog, or an unchristened child.

the priest advanced, and expressed his surprise at the throng of people assembled.

"Plase your Reverence," said Bartley, "*that's* the woman," nodding significantly towards her as he spoke, but without looking at her person, lest the evil eye he dreaded so much might meet his, and give him "the blast."

The dreaded female, on seeing the house in such a crowded state, started, paused, and glanced with some terror at the persons assembled. Her dress was not altered since her last visit; but her countenance, though more meagre and emaciated, expressed but little of the unsettled energy which then flashed from her eyes, and distorted her features by the depth of that mysterious excitement by which she had been agitated. Her countenance was still muffled as before, the awful protuberance rose from her shoulders, and the same band which Mrs. Sullivan had alluded to during their interview, was bound about the upper part of her forehead.

She had already stood upwards of two minutes, during which the fall of a feather might be heard, yet none bade God bless her—no kind hand was extended to greet her—no heart warmed in affection towards her; on the contrary, every eye glanced at her, as a being marked with enmity towards God. Blanched faces and knit brows, the signs of fear and hatred, were turned upon her; her breath was considered pestilential, and her touch paralysis. There she stood, proscribed, avoided, and hunted like a tigress, all fearing to encounter, yet wishing to exterminate her! Who could she be?—or what had she done, that the finger of the Almighty marked her out for such a fearful weight of vengeance?

Father Philip rose and advanced a few steps, until he stood confronting her. His person was tall, his features dark, severe, and solemn: and when the nature of the investigation about to take place is considered, it need not be wondered at, that the moment was, to those present, one of deep and impressive interest—such as a visible conflict between a supposed champion of God and a supernatural being was calculated to excite.

"Woman," said he, in his deep stern voice, "tell me who and what you are, and why you assume a character of such a repulsive and mysterious nature, when it can entail only misery, shame, and persecution on yourself? I conjure you, in the name of Him after whose image you are created, to speak truly?"

He paused, and the tall figure stood mute before him. The silence was dead as death—every breath was hushed—and the persons assembled stood immoveable as statues! Still she spoke not; but the violent heaving of her breast evinced the internal working of some dreadful struggle. Her face before was pale—it was now ghastly; her lips became blue, and her eyes vacant.

"Speak!" said he, "I conjure you in the name of the power by whom you live!"

It is probable that the agitation under which she laboured was produced by the severe effort made to sustain the unexpected trial she had to undergo.

For some minutes her struggle continued; but having begun at its highest pitch, it gradually subsided until it settled in a calmness which appeared fixed and awful as the resolution of despair. With breathless

composure she turned round, and put back that part of her dress which concealed her face, except the band on her forehead, which she did not remove; having done this, she turned again, and walked calmly towards Father Philip, with a deadly smile upon her thin lips. When within a step of where he stood, she paused, and rivetting her eyes upon him, exclaimed—

"Who and what am I? The victim of infidelity and you, the bearer of a cursed existence, the scoff and scorn of the world, the monument of a broken vow and a guilty life, a being scourged by the scorpion lash of conscience, blasted by periodical insanity, pelted by the winter's storm, scorched by the summer's heat, withered by starvation, hated by man, and touched into my inmost spirit by the anticipated tortures of future misery. I have no rest for the sole of my foot, no repose for a head distracted by the contemplation of a guilty life; I am the unclean spirit which walketh to seek rest and findeth none; I am—*what you have made me!* Behold," she added, holding up the bottle, "this failed, and I live to accuse you. But no, you are my husband—though our union was but a guilty form, and I will bury that in silence. You thought me dead, and you flew to avoid punishment—did you avoid it? No; the finger of God has written pain and punishment upon your brow. I have been in all characters, in all shapes, have spoken with the tongue of a peasant, moved in my natural sphere; but my knees were smitten, my brain stricken, and the wild malady which banishes me from society has been upon me for years. Such I am, and such I say, have you made me. As for you, kind-hearted woman, there was nothing in this bottle but pure water. The interval of reason returned this day, and having remembered glimpses of our conversation, I came to apologise to you, and to explain the nature of my unhappy distemper, and to beg a little bread, which I have not tasted for two days. I at times conceive myself attended by an evil spirit, shaped out by a guilty conscience, and this is the only familiar which attends me, and by it I have been dogged into madness through every turning of life. Whilst it lasts I am subject to spasms and convulsive starts which are exceedingly painful. The lump on my back is the robe I wore when innocent in my peaceful convent."

The intensity of general interest was now transferred to Father Philip; every face was turned towards him, but he cared not. A solemn stillness yet prevailed among all present. From the moment she spoke, her eye drew his with the power of a basilisk. His pale face became like marble, not a muscle moved; and when she ceased speaking, his blood-shot eyes were still fixed upon her countenance with a gloomy calmness like that which precedes a tempest. They stood before each other, dreadful counterparts in guilt, for truly his spirit was as dark as hers.

At length he glanced angrily around him:—"Well," said he, "what is it now, ye poor infatuated wretches, to trust in the sanctity *of man?* Learn from me to place the same confidence *in God* which you place in his *guilty creatures*, and you will not lean on a broken reed. Father O'Rourke, you, too, witness my disgrace, but not my punishment. It is

"I am what you have made me"

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pleasant, no doubt, to have a topic for conversation at your Conferences; enjoy it. As for you, Margaret, if society lessen misery, we may be less miserable. But the band of your order, and the remembrance of your vow is on your forehead, like the mark of Cain—tear it off, and let it not blast a man who is the victim of prejudice still, nay of superstition, as well as of guilt; tear it from my sight." His eyes kindled fearfully as he attempted to pull it away by force.

She calmly took it off, and he immediately tore it into pieces, and stamped upon the fragments as he flung them on the ground.

"Come," said the despairing man—"come—there is a shelter for you, *but no peace!*—food, and drink, and raiment, but *no peace!*—NO PEACE!" As he uttered these words, in a voice that sank to its deepest pitch, he took her hand, and they both departed to his own residence.

The amazement and horror of those who were assembled in Bartley's house cannot be described. Our readers may be assured that they deepened in character as they spread through the parish. An undefined fear of this mysterious pair seized upon the people, for their images were associated in their minds with darkness and crime, and supernatural communion. The departing words of Father Philip rang in their ears: they trembled, and devoutly crossed themselves, as fancy again repeated the awful exclamation of the priest—"No peace! no peace!"

When Father Philip and his unhappy associate went home, he instantly made her a surrender of his small property; but with difficulty did he command sufficient calmness to accomplish even this. He was distracted—his blood seemed to have been turned to fire—he clenched his hands, and he gnashed his teeth, and exhibited the wildest symptoms of madness. About ten o'clock he desired fuel for a large fire to be brought into the kitchen, and got a strong cord, which he coiled, and threw carelessly on the table. The family were then ordered to bed. About eleven they were all asleep; and at the solemn hour of twelve he heaped additional fuel upon the living turf, until the blaze shone with scorching light upon everything around. Dark and desolating was the tempest within him, as he paced, with agitated steps, before the crackling fire.

"She is risen!" he exclaimed—"the spectre of all my crimes is risen to haunt me through life! I *am* a murderer—yet she lives, and my guilt is not the less! The stamp of eternal infamy is upon me—the finger of scorn will mark me out—the tongue of reproach will sting me like that of the serpent—the deadly touch of shame will cover me like a leper—the laws of society will crush the murderer, not the less that his wickedness in blood has miscarried: after that comes the black and terrible tribunal of the Almighty's vengeance—of his fiery indignation! Hush!—What sounds are those? They deepen—they deepen! Is it thunder? It cannot be the crackling of the blaze! It *is* thunder!—but it speaks only to *my* ear! Hush!—Great God, there is a change in my voice! It is hollow and supernatural! Could a change have come over me? Am I living? Could I have———Hah!—Could I have departed? and am I now at length given over to the worm that never dies? If it be at my heart, I may feel it. God!—I am damned! Here is a viper twined about my limbs, trying to dart its fangs into my heart! Hah!—there are feet

pacing in the room, too, and I hear voices! I am surrounded by evil spirits! Who's there?—What are you?—Speak!—They are silent!—There is no answer! Again comes the thunder! But perchance this is not my place of punishment, and I will try to leave these horrible spirits!"

He opened the door, and passed out into a small green field that lay behind the house. The night was calm, and the silence profound as death. Not a cloud obscured the heavens;—the light of the moon fell upon the stillness of the scene around him, with all the touching beauty of a moonlit midnight in summer. Here he paused a moment, felt his brow, then his heart, the palpitations of which fell audibly upon his ear. He became somewhat cooler; the images of madness which had swept through his stormy brain disappeared, and were succeeded by a lethargic vacancy of thought, which almost deprived him of the consciousness of his own identity. From the green field he descended mechanically to a little glen which opened beside it. It was one of those delightful spots to which the heart clingeth. Its sloping sides were clothed with patches of wood, on the leaves of which the moonlight glanced with a soft lustre, rendered more beautiful by their stillness. That side on which the light could not fall, lay in deep shadow, which occasionally gave to the rocks and small projecting precipices an appearance of monstrous and unnatural life. Having passed through the tangled mazes of the glen, he at length reached its bottom, along which ran a brook, such as in the description of the poet,—

> ——— "In the leafy month of June,
> Unto the sleeping woods all night,
> Singeth a quiet tune."

Here he stood, and looked upon the green winding margin of the streamlet—but its song he heard not. With the workings of a guilty conscience, the beautiful in nature can have no association. He looked up the glen, but its picturesque windings, soft vistas, and wild underwood mingling with gray rocks and taller trees, all mellowed by the moon-beams, had no charms for him. He maintained a profound silence—but it was not the silence of peace or reflection. He endeavoured to recall the scenes of the past day, but could not bring them back to his memory. Even the fiery tide of thought, which, like burning lava, seared his brain a few moments before, was now cold and hardened. He could remember nothing. The convulsion of his mind was over, and his faculties were impotent and collapsed.

In this state he unconsciously retraced his steps, and had again reached the paddock adjoining his house, when, as he thought, the figure of his paramour stood before him. In a moment his former paroxysm returned, and with it the gloomy images of a guilty mind, charged with the extravagant horrors of brain-struck madness.

"What!" he exclaimed, "the band still on your forehead! Tear it off!"

He caught at the form as he spoke, but there was no resistance to his grasp. On looking again towards the spot it had ceased to be visible The storm within him arose once more; he rushed into the kitchen, where the fire blazed out with fiercer heat; again he imagined that the thunder came to his ears, but the thunderings which he heard were only the voice of conscience. Again his own footsteps and his voice sounded in his

fancy as the footsteps and voices of fiends, with which his imagination peopled the room. His state and his existence seemed to him a confused and troubled dream; he tore his hair—threw it on the table—and immediately started back with a hollow groan; for his locks, which but a few hours before had been as black as the raven's wing, were now white as snow!

On discovering this, he gave a low but frantic laugh. "Ha, ha, ha!" he exclaimed; "here is another mark—here is food for despair. Silently, but surely, did the hand of God work this, as a proof that I am hopeless! But I will bear it; I will bear the sight! I now feel myself a man blasted by the eye of God himself! Ha, ha, ha! Food for despair! Food for despair!"

Immediately he passed into his own room, and approaching the looking-glass beheld a sight calculated to move a statue. His hair had become literally white, but the shades of his dark complexion, now distorted by terror and madness, flitted, as his features worked under the influence of his tremendous passions, into an expression so frightful, that deep fear came over himself. He snatched one of his razors, and fled from the glass to the kitchen. He looked upon the fire, and saw the white ashes lying around its edge.

"Ha!" said he, "the light is come! I see the sign. I am directed, and I will follow it. There is yet ONE hope. The immolation! I shall be saved, yet so as by fire. It is for this my hair has become white;—the sublime warning for my self-sacrifice! The colour of ashes!—white—white! It is so!—I will sacrifice my body in material fire, to save my soul from that which is eternal! But I had anticipated the SIGN! The self-sacrifice is accepted!"*

We must here draw a veil over that which ensued, as the description of it would be both unnatural and revolting. Let it be sufficient to say, that the next morning he was found burned to a cinder, with the exception of his feet and legs, which remained as monuments of, perhaps, the most dreadful suicide that ever was committed by man. His razor, too, was found bloody, and several clots of gore were discovered about the hearth; from which circumstances it was plain that he had reduced his strength so much by loss of blood, that when he committed himself to the

* As the reader may be disposed to consider the nature of the priest's death an unjustifiable stretch of fiction, I have only to say in reply, that it is no fiction at all. It is not, I believe, more than forty, or perhaps fifty years, since a priest committed his body to the flames for the purpose of saving his soul by an incrematory sacrifice. The object of the suicide being founded on the superstitious belief, that a priest guilty of great crimes possesses the privilege of securing salvation by self-sacrifice. We have heard two or three legends among the people in which this principle predominated. The outline of one of these, called "The Young Priest and Brian Braar," was as follows:—

A young priest on his way to the College of Valladolid, in Spain, was benighted; but found a lodging in a small inn on the road side. Here he was tempted by a young maiden of great beauty, who, in the moment of his weakness, extorted from him a bond signed with his blood, binding himself to her for ever. She turned out to be an evil spirit: and the young priest proceeded to Valladolid with a heavy heart, confessed his crime to the Superior, who sent him to the Pope, who sent him to a Friar in the County of Armagh, called Brian Braar, who sent him to the devil. The devil, on the strength of Brian Braar's letter, gave him a warm reception, held a cabinet council immediately, and laid the despatch before his colleagues, who agreed that the claimant should get back his bond from the brimstone lady who had inveigled him. She, however, obstinately refused to surrender it, and stood upon her bond, until threatened

flames, he was unable, even had he been willing, to avoid the fiery and awful sacrifice of which he made himself the victim. If anything could deepen the impression of fear and awe, already so general among the people, it was the unparalleled nature of his death. Its circumstances are yet remembered in the parish and county wherein it occurred—*for it is no fiction*, gentle reader! and the titular bishop who then presided over the diocese, declared, that while he lived, no person bearing the unhappy man's name should ever be admitted to the clerical order.

The shock produced by his death struck the miserable woman into the utter darkness of settled derangement. She survived him some years, but wandered about through the province, still, according to the superstitious belief of the people, tormented by the terrible enmity of the *Lianhan Shee*.

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with being thrown three times into Brian Braar's furnace. This tamed her: the man got his bond, and returned to Brian Braar on earth. Now Brian Braar had for three years past abandoned God, and taken to the study of magic with the devil; a circumstance which accounts for his influence below. The young priest, having possessed himself of his bond, went to Lough Derg to wash away his sins; and Brian Braar, having also become penitent, the two worthies accompanied each other to the lake. On entering the boat, however, to cross over to the island, such a storm arose as drove them back. Brian assured his companion that he himself was the cause of it.

"There is now," said he, "but one more chance for *me;* and we must have recourse to it."

He then returned homewards, and both had reached a hill-side near Brian's house, when the latter desired the young priest to remain there a few minutes, and he would return to him; which he did with a hatchet in his hand.

"Now," said he, "you must cut me into four quarters, and mince my body into small bits, then cast them into the air, and let them go with the wind."

The priest, after much entreaty, complied with his wishes, and returned to Lough Derg, where he afterwards lived twelve years upon one meal of bread and water *per diem*. Having thus purified himself, he returned home; but on passing the hill where he had minced the Friar, he was astonished to see the same man celebrating mass, attended by a very penitential-looking congregation of spirits.

"Ah," said Brian Braar, when mass was over, "you are now a happy man. With regard to my state, *for the voluntary sacrifice I have made of myself, I am to be saved;* but I must remain on this mountain until the Day of Judgment." So saying he disappeared.

There is little to be said about the superstition of the *Lianhan Shee*, except that it existed as we have drawn it, and that it is now fading fast away. There is also something appropriate in associating the heroine of this little story with the being called the *Lianhan Shee*, because, setting the superstition aside, any female who fell into her crime was called *Lianhan Shee*. *Lianhan Shee an Sogarth* signifies a priest's paramour, or, as the country people say, "Miss." Both terms have now nearly become obsolete.

GOING TO MAYNOOTH.

Young Denis O'Shaughnessy was old Denis's son; and old Denis, like many great men before him, was the son of his father and mother in particular, and of a long line of respectable ancestors in general. He was, moreover, a great historian, a perplexing controversialist, deeply read in Dr. Gallagher and Pastorini, and equally profound in the history of Harry the Eighth, and Luther's partnership with the devil. Denis was a tall man, who from his peculiar appearance, and the nature of his dress, a light drab-coloured frieze, was nicknamed the Walking Pigeon-house; and truly on seeing him at a distance, a man might naturally enough hit upon a worse comparison. He was quite straight, carried both arms hanging by his sides, motionless and at their full length, like the pendulums of a clock that has ceased going. In his head, neck, and chest there was no muscular action visible; he walked, in fact, as if a milk-pail were upon his crown, or as if a single nod of his

would put the planets out of order. But the principal cause of the similarity lay in his roundness, which resembled that of a pump, running to a point, or the pigeon-house aforesaid, which is still better.

Denis, though a large man, was but a small farmer, for he rented only eighteen acres of good land. His family, however, like himself, was large, consisting of thirteen children, among whom Denis Junior stood pre-eminent. Like old Denis, he was exceedingly long-winded in argument, pedantic as the schoolmaster who taught him, and capable of taking a very comprehensive grasp of any tangible subject.

Young Denis's display of controversial talents was so remarkably precocious, that he controverted his father's statements upon all possible subjects, with a freedom from embarrassment which promised well for that most distinguished trait in a controversialist—hardihood of countenance. This delighted old Denis to the finger ends.

"Dinny, if he's spared," he would say, "will be a credit to us all yet. The sorra one of him but's as manly as any thing, and as long-headed as a four-footed baste, so he is! Nothing daunts or dashes him, or puts him to an amplush: but he'll look you in the face so stout an' cute, an' never redden or stumble, whether he's right or wrong, that it does one's heart good to see him. Then he has such a laning to it, you see, that the crathur 'ud ground an argument on any thing, thin draw it out to a norration an' make it as clear as rock-water, besides insensing you so well into the rason of the thing, that Father Finnerty himself 'ud hardly do it betther from the althar."

The highest object of an Irish peasant's ambition is to see his son a priest. Whenever a farmer happens to have a large family, he usually destines one of them for the church, if his circumstances are at all such as can enable him to afford the boy a proper education. This youth becomes the centre in which all the affections of the family meet. He is cherished, humoured in all his caprices, indulged in his boyish predilections, and raised over the heads of his brothers, independently of all personal or relative merit in himself. The consequence is, that he gradually becomes self-willed, proud, and arrogant, often to an offensive degree; but all this is frequently mixed up with a lofty bombast, and an undercurrent of strong disguised affection, that render his early life remarkably ludicrous and amusing. Indeed, the pranks of pedantry, the pretensions to knowledge, and the humour with which it is mostly displayed, render these scions of divinity, in their intercourse with the people until the period of preparatory education is completed, the most interesting and comical class, perhaps, to be found in the kingdom. Of these learned priestlings young Denis was undoubtedly a first-rate specimen. His father, a man of no education, was, nevertheless, as profound and unfathomable upon his favourite subjects as a philosopher; but this profundity raised him mightily in the opinion of the people, who admired him the more the less they understood him.

Now old Denis was determined that young Denis should tread in his own footsteps; and, sooth to say, young Denis possessed as bright a talent for the dark and mysterious as the father himself. No sooner had the son commenced Latin with the intention of adorning the church, than the

father put him in training for controversy. For a considerable time the laurels were uniformly borne away by the veteran: but what will not learning do? Ere long the son got as far as syntax, about which time the father began to lose ground, in consequence of some ugly quotations which the son threw into his gizzard, and which unfortunately stuck there. By and by the father receded more and more, as the son advanced in his Latin and Greek, until, at length, their encounters were only resorted to for the purpose of showing off the son.

When young Denis had reached the age of sixteen or seventeen, he was looked upon by his father and his family, as well as by all their relations in general, as a prodigy. It was amusing to witness the delight with which the worthy man would call upon his son to exhibit his talents, a call to which the son instantly attended. This was usually done by commencing a mock controversy, for the gratification of some neighbour to whom the father was anxious to prove the great talents of his son. When old Denis got the young *sogarth* fairly in motion, he gently drew himself out of the dispute, but continued a running comment upon the son's erudition, pointed out his good things, and occasionally resumed the posture of the controversialist to re-inspirit the boy if he appeared to flag.

"Denny, abouchal, will you come up till Phadrick Murray hears you arguin' Scripther wid myself, Dinny. Now, Phadrick, listen, but keep your tongue sayin' nothin'; jist lave us to ourselves. Come up, Dinny, till you have a hate at arguin' wid myself."

"Fadher, I condimnate you at once—I condimnate you as being a most ungrammatical ould man, an' not fit to argue wid any one that knows Murray's English Grammar, an' more espaciously the three concords of Lilly's Latin one; that is the cognation between the nominative case and the verb, the consanguinity between the substantive and the adjective, and the blood-relationship that irritates between the relative and the antecedent."

"I tould you, Phadrick!! There's the boy that can rattle off the high English, and the larned Latin, jist as if he was born wid an English Dixonary in one cheek, a Latin Neksuggawn in the other, an' Doctor Gallagher's Irish Sarmons nately on the top of his tongue between the two."

"Fadher, but that unfortunately I am afflicted wid modesty, I'd blush *crocus* for your ignorance, as Virgil asserts in his Bucolics, *ut Virgilius ait in Bucolicis;* and as Horatius, a book that I'm well acquainted wid, says in another place, *Huc pertinent verba*, says he, *commodandi, comparandi, dandi, promittendi, solvendi imperandi nuntiandi, fidendi, obsequendi, minandi irascendi, et iis contraria.*"

"That's a good boy, Dinny; but why would you blush for *my* ignorance, avourneen? Take care of yourself now, an' spake deep, for I'll out argue you at the heel o' the hunt, cute as you are."

"Why do I blush for your ignorance, is it? why thin, I'm sure I have sound rasons for it: only think of the gross persivarance wid which you call that larned work, the Lexicon in Greek, a neck-suggan. Fadher, never attimpt to argue or display your ignorance wid me again. But, moreover, I can probate you to be an ungrammatical man, from your own *modus* of argument."

"Go on, avourneen. Phadrick!!"

"I'm listenin'. The sorra's no match for his cuteness, an' one's puzzled to think where he can get it all."

"Why, you don't know at all what I could do by larnin'. It would be no trouble to me to divide myself into two halves, an' argue the one agin the other."

"You would, in throth, Dinny."

"Ay, father, or cut myself acrass, an' dispute my head, maybe, agin my heels."

"Throth would you!"

"Or practise logic wid my right hand, and bate that agin with my left."

"The sarra lie in it."

"Or read the Greek Tistament wid my right eye, an' thranslate it at the same time wid my left, according to the Greek an' English sides of my face, wid my tongue constrein' it into Irish, unknownst to both o' them."

"Why, Denis, he must have a head like a bell to be able to get into things."

"Throth an' he has that, an' 'ill make a noise in conthroversy yet, if he lives. Now, Dinny, let us have a hate at histhory."

"A hate at histhory?—wid all my heart; but before we begin, I tell you that I'll confound you precipitately; for you see, if you bate me in the English, I'll scarify you wid Latin, and give you a bang or two of Greek into the bargain. Och! I wish you'd hear the sackin' I gave Tom Reilly the other day; rubbed him down, as the masther says, wid a Greek towel, an' whenever I complimented him with the loan of a cut on the head, I always gave him a plaster of Latin to heal it; but the sorra worse healin' flesh in the world than Tom's is for the Latin, so I bruised a few Greek roots and laid them to his *caput* so nate, that you'd laugh to see him. Well is it histhory we are to begin wid? If it is, come on—advance. I'm ready for you—in protection—wid my guards up."

"Ha, ha, ha! Well, if he isn't the drollest crathur, an' so cute! But now for the *histhory*. Can you prove to me, upon a clear foundation, the differ atween black an' white, or prove that Phadrick Murray here, long life to him, is an ass? Now, Phadrick, listen, for you must decide betune us."

"Orra, have you no other larnin' than that to argue upon? Sure if you call upon me to decide, I must give it agin Dinny. Why, my judgment won't be worth a hap'orth, if he makes an ass of me!"

"What matther how you decide, man alive, if he proves you to be one; sure that's all we want. Never heed shakin' your head—listen an' it will be well worth your while. Why, man, you'll know more nor you ever knew or suspected before, when he proves you to be an ass."

"In the first place, fadher, you're ungrammatical in one word; instead of sayin' 'prove,' always say probate, or probe; the word is descindid, that is, the ancisthor of it is, *probo*, a deep Greek word—*probo*, *probas*, *prob-ass*, that is to say, I'm to *probe* Phadrick here to be an *ass*. Now, do you see how pat I brought that in? That's the way, Phadrick, I chastise my fadher with the languages."

"In throth it is; go an, avick. Phadrick!"

"I'm listenin'."

"Phadrick, do you know the differ atween black an' white?"

"Atween black an' white? Hut, gorsoon, to be sure I do."

"Well, an' what might it be, Phadrick, my larned Athiop? What might it be, I negotiate?"

"Why, thin, the differ atween them is this, Dinny, that black is—let me see—why—that black is *not* red—nor yallow—nor brown—nor green—nor purple—nor cutbeard—nor a heather colour—nor a grogram"——

"Nor a white?"

"Surely, Dinny, not a white, abouchal; don't think to come over me that way."

"But I want to know what colour it *is*, most larned sager."

"All rasonable, Dinny. Why, thin, black is—let me see—hut, death alive!—it's—a—a—why, it's black, an' that's all I can say about it; yes, faix, I can—black is the colour of Father Curtis's coat."

"An' what colour is that, Phadrick?"

"Why, it 's black, to be sure."

"Well, now, what colour is white, Phadrick?"

"Why, it 's a snow-colour: for all the world the colour of snow."

"White is?"

"Ay, is it."

"The dear help your head, Phadrick, if that 's all you know about snow. In England, man, snow is an Oxford grey, an' in Scotland a pepper an' salt, an' sometimes a cutbeard, when they get a hard winther. I found that much in the Greek, any way, Phadrick. Thry agin, you imigrant, I 'll give you another chance—what colour is white?"

"Why, thin, it 's—white—an' nothin' else. The sorra one but you 'd puzzle a saint wid your long-headed screwtations from books."

"So, Phadrick, your preamble is, that white is white, an' black is black?"

"Asy, avick. I said, sure enough, that white is white; but the black I deny—I said it was the colour of Father Curtis's black coat."

"Oh, you barbarian of the world, how I scorn your profundity an' emotions! You 're a disgrace to the human sex by your supercilliousness of knowledge, an' your various quotations of ignorance. *Ignorantia*, Phadrick, is your date, an' superscription. Now, stretch out your ears, till I probate, or probe to you the differ atween black an' white."

"Phadrick!!" said the father.

"I 'm listenin'."

"Now, Phadrick, here 's the griddle, an' here 's a clane plate. Do you see them here beside one another?"

"I 'm lookin' at them."

"Now, shut your eyes."

"Is that *your* way, Denis, of judgin' colours?"

"Shut your eyes, I say, till I give you *ocular* demonstration of the differ atween these two respectable colours."

"Well, they 're shut."

"An' keep them so. Now, what differ do you *see* atween them?"

"The sorra taste, man alive; I never *seen* anything in my whole life so clearly of a colour as they are both this minute."

"Don't you see now, Phadrick, that there 's not the smallest taste o' differ in them, an' that 's accordin' to Euclid."

"Sure enough, I see the divil a taste o' differ atween the two."

"Well, Phadrick, that 's the point settled. There 's no discrimination at all atween black an' white. They 're both of the same colour—so long as you keep your eyes shut."

"But if a man happens to open his eyes, Dinny?"

"He has no *right* to open them, Phadrick, if he wants to prove the truth of a thing. I should have said *probe*—but it does not significate."

"The heavens mark you to grace, Dinny. You did that in brave style. Phadrick, ahagur, he 'll make the darlin' of an arguer whin he gets the robes an him."

"I don't deny that; he 'll be aquil to the best o' thim: still Denis, I 'd rather, whin I want to pronounce upon colours, that he 'd let me keep my eyes open."

"Ay, but he did it out o' the books, man alive; an' there 's no goin' beyant thim. Sure he could prove it out of the Divinity, if you went to that. An' what is still more, he could, by shuttin' your eyes, in the same way prove black to be white, an' white black, jist as asy."

"Surely myself does n't doubt it. I suppose, by shuttin' my eyes, the same lad could prove anything to me."

"But, Dinny, avourneen, you did n't prove Phadrick to be an ass yit. Will you do that by histhory, too, Dinny, or by the norrations of Illocution?"

"Father, I 'm surprised at yonr gross imperception. Why, man, if you were not a *rara avis* of somnolency, a man of most frolicsome determinations, you 'd be able to see that I 've proved Phadrick to be an ass already."

"Throth, I deny that you did; there was n't a word about my bein' an ass, in the last discoorse. It was all upon the differ atween black an' white."

"Oh, how I scorn your gravity, man! *Ignorantia*, as I said, is your date an' superscription; an' when you die, you ought to go an' engage a stone-cutter to carve you a head-stone, an' make him write on it, *Hic jacet Ignorantius Redivivus*. An' the translation of that is, accordin' to Publius Virgilius Maro—'here lies a quadruped who did n't know the differ atween black an' white.'"

"Well, by the livin', Dinny, I dunna where you get all this deep readin'."

"Sure he gets it all in the Dixonary."

"Bedad, that Dixonary must be a fine book entirely, to thim that can undherstand it."

"But, Dinny, will you tell Phadrick the Case of Conscience atween Barny Branagan's two goats an' Parra Ghastha's mare?"

"Fadher, if you were a grammarian I 'd castigate your incompatability as it desarves—I 'd lay the scourge o' syntax upon you, as no man ever got it since the invintion o' the nine parts of speech. By what rule of logic can you say that aither Barny Branagan's goats or Parra

Ghastha's mare had a conscience? I tell you it was n't they had the conscience, but the divine who decided the difficulty. Phadrick, lie down till I illusthrate."

"How is that, Dinny? I can hear you sittin'."

"Lie down, you reptile, or I shall decline the narration altogether."

"Arra, lie down, Phadrick; sure he only wants to show you the rason o' the thing."

"Well, well; I 'm down. Now Dinny, do n't let your feet be too larned, if you plase."

"Silence!—*taceto!* you reptile. Now, Phadrick, here, on this side o' you, lies Barny Branagan's field; an' there, on that side, lies a field of Parra Ghastha's; you're the ditch o' mud betuxt them."

"The ditch o' mud! Faix that's dacent!"

"Now here, on Barny Branagan's side, feeds Parra Ghastha's mare; an' there, on Parra Ghastha's side, feed Barny Branagan's goats. Do you comprehend? Do you insinuate?"

"I do—I do. Death alive! there's no use in punchin' my sides wid your feet that way."

"Well, get up now an' set your ears."

"Now listen to him, Phadrick!"

"It was one night in winter, when all nature shone in the nocturnal beauty of tenebrosity: the sun had set about three hours before; an', accordin' to the best logicians, there was a dearth of light. It's the general opinion of philosophers—that is, of the soundest o' them—that when the sun is down the moon an' stars are usually up; an' so they were on the night that I'm narratin' about. The moon was, wid great respect to her character, night-walkin' in the sky; and the stars vegetated in celestial genuflexion around her. Nature, Phadrick, was in great state; the earth was undher our feet, an' the sky above us. The frost, too, was hard, Phadrick, the air keen, an' the grass tendher. All things were enrobed wid verisimilitude an' scrupulosity. In this manner was the terraqueous part of our system, when Parra Ghastha's mare, after havin' taken a cowld collation on Barny Branagan's grass, was returnin' to her master's side o' the merin; an' Barny Branagan's goats, havin' tasted the sweets of Parra Ghastha's cabbages, were on their way acrass the said merin to their own side. Now it so happened that they met exactly at a narrow gap in the ditch behind Rosha Halpin's house. The goats, bein' coupled together, got one on each of the rift, wid the rope that coupled them extended acrass it. The mare stood in the middle of it, so that the goats were in the way of the mare, an' the mare in the way of the goats. In the mean time they surveyed one another wid great composure, but had neither of them the politeness to stir, until Rosha Halpin came suddenly out, an' emptied a vessel of untransparent wather into the ditch. The mare, who must have been an animal endowed wid great sensibility of soul, stooped her head suddenly at the noise; an' the goats, who were equally sentimental, gave a start from nervishness. The mare, on raisin' her head came in contact wid the cord that united the goats; an' the goats, havin' lost their commandin' position, came in contact wid the neck o' the mare. *Quid multis?* They pulled an' she pulled, an' she pulled an' they pulled, until at length the mare was compelled to practise the

virtue of resignation in the ditch, wid the goats about her neck. She died by suspinsion; but the mettlesome ould crathur, wid a love of justice that did her honour, hanged the goats in requital; for they departed this vale of tears on the mountain side along wid her, so that they had the satisfaction of dyin' a social death together.—Now, Phadrick, you quadruped, the case of conscience is, whether Parra Ghastha has a right to make restitution to Barny Branagan for the loss of his goats, or Barny Branagan to Parra Ghastha for the loss of his mare?"

"Bedad, that's a puzzler!"

"Isn't it, Phadrick? But wait till you hear how he'll clear it up! Do it for Phadrick, Dinny."

"Yis, Phadrick, I'll illusthrate your intellects by divinity. You see, Phadrick, you're to suppose me to be in the chair, as confessor. Very well—or *valde*, in the larned languages—Parra Ghastha comes to confess to me, an' tells me that Barny Branagan wants to be paid for his goats. I tell him it's a disputed point, an' that the price o' the *goats* must go to the church. On the other hand, Barny Branagan tells me that Parra Ghastha wishes to be paid for his mare. I say again, it's a disputed point, an' that the price of the *mare* must go the church—the amount of the proceeds to be applied in prayer towards the benefit of the parties, in the first instance, an' of the faithful in general afterwards."

"Phadrick!!!"

"Oh, that I may never, but he bates the globe!"

Denny's character is a very common one in the remote parts of Ireland, where knowledge is novelty, and where the slightest tinge of learning is looked upon with such reverence and admiration, as can be properly understood only by those who have an opportunity of witnessing it. Indeed, few circumstances prove the great moral influence which the Irish priesthood possess over the common people more forcibly, than the extraordinary respect paid by the latter to such as are designed for the "mission." The moment the determination is made, an incipient sanctity begins, as it were, to consecrate the young priest; and a high opinion of his learning and talents to be entertained, no matter how dull he may be so far as honest nature is concerned. Whatever he says is sure to have some hidden meaning in it, that would be highly edifying, if they themselves understood it. But their own humility comes in here to prop up his talents; and whatsoever perplexity there may be in the sense of what he utters, is immediately attributed to learning altogether beyond *their* depth.

Love of learning is a conspicuous principle in an Irish peasant; and in no instance is it seen to greater advantage, than when the object of it appears in the "makins of a priest." Among all a peasant's good and evil qualities, this is not the least amiable. How his eye will dance in his head with pride, when the young priest thunders out a line of Virgil or Homer, a sentence from Cicero, or a rule from Syntax! And with what complacency and affection will the father and relations of such a person, when sitting during a winter evening about the hearth, demand from him a translation of what he repeats, or a grammatical analysis, in which he must show the dependencies and relations of word upon word—the concord, the verb, the mood, the gender, and the case; into every

one and all of which the learned youth enters with an air of oracular importance, and a polysyllabicism of language that fails not in confounding them with astonishment and edification. Neither does Paddy confine himself to Latin or Greek, for his curiosity in hearing a little upon all known branches of human learning is boundless. When a lad is *designed* for the priesthood, he is, as if by a species of intuition, supposed to know more or less of everything—astronomy, fluxions, Hebrew, Arabic, and the black art, are subjects upon which he is frequently expected to dilate; and vanity scruples not, under the protection of their ignorance, to lead the erudite youth through what they believe to be the highest regions of imagination, or the profoundest depths of science and philosophy.

It is, indeed, in those brilliant moments, when the young priest is launching out in full glory upon some topic of which he knows not a syllable, that it would be a learned luxury to catch him. These flights, however, are very pardonable, when we consider the importance they give him in the eyes of his friends, and reflect upon that lofty and contemptuous pride, and those delectable sensations which the appearance of superior knowledge gives to the pedant, whether raw or trained, high or low, in this profession or the other. It matters little that such a feeling dilates the vanity in proportion to the absence of real knowledge or good sense: it is not real, but affected knowledge, we are writing about. Pride is confined to no condition; nor is the juvenile pedantry of a youth upon the hob of an Irish chimney-corner much different from the pride which sits upon the brow of a worthy Lord Mayor, freshly knighted, lolling with strained dignity beside his honourable brother, the mace, during a city procession; or of a Lady Mayoress, when she reads upon a dead wall her own name flaming in yellow capitals, at the head of a subscription ball; or, what is better still, the contemptuous glance which, while about to open the said ball, her ladyship throws at that poor creature—the Sheriff's wife.

In addition, however, to the enjoyment of this assumption of profound learning which characterises the young priest, a different spirit, considerably more practical, often induces him to hook in other motives. The learning of Denis O'Shaughnessy, for instance, blazed with peculiar lustre whenever he felt himself out at elbows; for the logic with which he was able to prove the connection between his erudition and a woollen-draper's shop, was, like the ignorance of those who are to be saved, invincible. Whenever his father considered a display of the son's powers in controversy to be *capital*, Denis, who knew the *mollia tempora fandi*, applied to him for a hat. Whenever he drew a heretic, as a person who will be found hereafter without the wedding garment, and clinched the argument with half a dozen quotations from syntax or Greek grammar, he uniformly came down upon the father for a coat, the cloth of which was fine in proportion to the web of logic he wove during the disputation. Whenever he seated himself in the chair of rhetoric, or gave an edifying homily on prayer, with such eloquence as rendered the father's admiration altogether inexpressible, he applied for a pair of small-clothes; and if, in the excursiveness of his vigorous imagination he travelled anywhere beyond the bounds of common sense, he was certain to secure a pair of shoes.

This, of course, did not escape the satirical observation of the neighbours, who commented upon the circumstance with that good humour which renders their mother-wit so pleasant and spicy. The scenes where many of these displays took place, varied according to the occurrence of those usual incidents which diversify country life. Sometimes old Denis's hearth was selected; at others, a neighbouring wakehouse, and not unfrequently the chapel-green, where, surrounded by a crowd of eager listeners, the young priest and his Latin would succeed in throwing the hedge-schoolmaster and his problems completely into the shade.

The father's pride, on these occasions, always prompted him to become the aggressor; but he only did this to draw out the talents of his son to more advantage. Never was man foiled with less regret than old Denis; nor did ever man more bitterly repent those little touches of vanity, which sometimes induced him, when an opportunity of prostrating Denny arrived, to show what he *could* have done, by giving the son's argument an unexpected brainblow. These accidental defeats always brought the son more than he lost by them; for the father usually made him a peace-offering in the shape of pocket-money, books, or clothes. The great amusement of the peasantry around the chapel-green of a Sunday, was to hear the father and son engaged in argument: and so simple was the character of both, that their acquaintances declared they could know by the state of young Denis's coat, and the swaggering grasp with which old Denis held his staff, that an encounter was about to take place.

"Young O'Shaughnessy's gettin' bare," they would observe; "there'll be hard arguin' till he gets the clothes. He's puttin' in for a black coat now, he's so grave. Go on, Denny," they would say again: "more power an' a dacenter sleeve to your elbow. Stick to him!—very good!—that's a clincher!—you're gone beyond the skirts, Denny!—let him pocket that larnin'! Dinis, you're bate, body and slaves!*—you're no match for the gorsoon, Dinis. Good agin, abouchal!—that's puttin' the collar on it!"—And so on, varying the phrase according to the whim of the moment.

Nothing gave the father greater pleasure than these observations, although the affected earnestness with which he encountered the son, and his pretended indignation at those who affirmed him to have been beaten, were highly amusing to the bystanders.

Such discussions were considered highly edifying and instructive by them, and they were sometimes at a loss whether to give the palm of ingenuity and eloquence to the father or Denny. The reader, however, must not suppose that the contemptuous expressions scattered over Denny's rhetorical flourishes, when discussing these points with his father, implied want of reverence or affection—far from it. On the contrary, the father always liked him the better for them, inasmuch as they proved Denny's vast superiority over himself. They were, therefore, only the licenses and embellishments of discussion, tolerated and encouraged by him to whom they were applied.

Denny at length shot up to the stature of a young man, probably about eighteen; and during the two last years of his school studies, he presented

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* Altogether—completely.

a considerable, if not a decidedly marked change in his character and external appearance. His pride became more haughty, and the consciousness of his learning, and of the influence annexed to the profession for which he was intended, put itself forth with less discussion but more energy. His manners and attitude became constrained; the expression of his face began to darken, and to mould itself into a stiff, gloomy formality, that was strongly calculated to conceal the natural traits of his character. His dress, too, had undergone a great improvement; for instead of wearing shop blue or brown, he wore good black broad-cloth, had a watch in his fob, a respectable hat, and finer linen.

This change, now necessary in consequence of his semiclerical character, influenced him through every relation of life. His nearest friends, whilst their pride in him increased, fell off to a more respectful distance; and his deportment, so far from being that of the good-humoured Bobadil of polemics and pedantry upon all known and unknown subjects, became silent and solemn, chequered only during the moments of family conviviality by an excessive flow of that pleasant and still incomprehensible learning, for the possession of which he had so honestly earned himself a character. Much of his pedantry was now lopped off, it is true, because the pride of his station prevented him from entering into discussions with the people. It cost him, however, some trouble to overcome his early tendencies; nor, after all, can it be affirmed that he altogether succeeded in eradicating them. Many a grave shrug, and solemn wink, and formal nod, had he to answer for, when his foot touched the debateable land of controversy. Though contrary to the keeping and dignity of his position in life, yet did honest Denny then get desperately significant, and his face amazingly argumentative. Many a pretender has he fairly annihilated by a single smile of contempt that contained more logic than a long argument from another man. In fact, the whole host of rhetorical figures seemed breaking out of his face. By a solitary glance of his eye he could look a man into a dilemma, and practice a *sorites*, or a home-made syllogism, by the various shiftings of his countenance, as clearly as if he had risen to the full flight of his former bombast. He had, in short, a *primâ facie* disposition to controversy; his nose was set upon his face in a kind of firm defiance against infidels, heretics, and excommunicated persons; and when it curled with contempt of another, or with pride in the power that slumbered in itself, it seemed to give the face from which it projected, and the world at large, the assurance of a controversialist. Nor did his negative talents rest here: a twist of his mouth to the right or left ear, was nicely shaded away into a negative or affirmative, according as he intended it should be taken; and when he used his pocket-handkerchief, he was certain, though without uttering a syllable, to silence his opponent, so contemptuously did his intonations rout the arguments brought against him. The significance and force of all these was heightened by the mystery in which they were wrapped; for whenever unbending decorum constrained him to decline the challenges of the ignorant, with whom discussion would now be degradation, what could he do to soothe his vanity, except, as the poet says, with folded arms and a shaking of the head to exclaim—" *Well, well, we know;* or, *we could, an if we would;* or, *if we*

*list to speak;* or, *there be an if they might;*" which left the imaginations of his hearers at liberty to conceive more fully of those powers which his modesty declined exhibiting. For some time before he got absolutely and finally into black, even his father gave up his accustomed argument in despair. The son had become an adept in all the intricacies and obscurities of Latin, and literally overwhelmed the old man with small inundations of that language, which though, like all inundations, rather muddy, yet were they quite sufficient to sweep the worthy veteran before them.

Young Denis O'Shaughnessy was now pretty nearly finished at school, that is to say, almost fit for Maynooth; his studies, though higher, were less assiduous; his leisure was consequently greater; and it is well known, that a person of his character is never asked to work, except it be his own pleasure to labour a day or two, by way of amusement. He might now be seen walking of a warm day along the shady sides of the hedges, with a book in his hand, or stretched listlessly upon the grass, at *study;* or sauntering about among the neighbouring workmen, with his fore-finger between the leaves of his book, a monument of learning and industry.

It is not to be supposed, however, that Denis, who was an Irishman of eighteen, handsome and well made, could be altogether insensible to female beauty, and the seductive charms of the sex. During his easy saunterings—or, as the Scotch say, "daunerings"—along the roads and about the green hedges, it often happened that he met a neighbour's daughter; and Denis, who, as a young gentleman of breeding, was bound to be courteous, could not do less than accost her with becoming urbanity.

"Good mornin', Miss Norah," we will suppose him to say, when meeting a good-looking, arch girl of his acquaintance.

"Good morrow, Mr. O'Shaughnessy. I hope you're well, Sir."

"Indeed I am, at present, in superlatively ecclesiastical health, Miss Norah. I hope all *your* family are well?"

"All very well, I thank you, Sir, barrin' myself."

"An' pray what's the matther wid you, Miss Norah? I hope" (with an exceeding grave but complacent smile) "you 're not affected wid the amorous passion of love?"

"Oh, that 'ud be tellin', Mr. O'Shaughnessy! But supposin' I am, what ought I to do?"

"That 's really a profound question, Miss Norah. But though I cannot tell you what to do, I can tell you what I think."

"An' what is that, Sir?"

"Why, Miss Norah, that he who is so beatified as to secure you in the matrimonial paction—*compactum* it is in the larned languages—in other words—to condescend to your capacity—he who is married to you will be a happy man. There is a juvenility about your eyes, and an efflorescence of amaranthine odoriferousness about your cheeks and breath, that are enough to communicate the centrifugal motion to any brain adorned with the slightest modicum of sentiment."

"He who marries me will be a happy man!" she exclaimed, repeating these expressions, probably because they were the only words she understood. "I hope so, Misther O'Shaughnessy. But, sure enough, who 'd

Denis teaching Morality and practising "fulosphy"

Going to Maynooth

expect to hear sich soft talk from the makins of a priest! Very well, Sir! Upon my word I'll be tellin' Father Finnerty that you do be spakin' up to the girls!—Now!!"

"No, no, Miss Norah; you wouldn't do that merely for my sayin' that you 're the handsomest girl in the parish. Father Finnerty himself might say as much, for it would be nothing but veracity—nothing but truth, Miss Norah."

"Ay! but he would n't be pattin' me on the cheek! Be asy, Mr. O'Shaughnessy; there's Darby Brady lookin' at you, an' he 'll be tellin'!"

"Where?" said Denis, starting.

The girl replied only by an arch laugh.

"Upon my classicality, Miss Norah, you 're a rogue; there 's nobody lookin', you seraphim!"

"Then there 's a pair of us rogues, Misther Dinis."

"No, no, Miss Norah; I was only feeling your cheek as a philosophical experiment. Philosophers often do it, in order to make out an hypothesis."

"Misther Dinis, if I'm not marrid till you're a priest, won't you say the words for me for nothing?"

"So long as you ask it wid such a brilliant smile, Miss Norah, do you think that any educated young man, who has read about beauty an' sentimentality in books, could refuse you? But you know, Miss Norah, that the clergyman who marries a couple has always the right of kissing the bride. Now I wouldn't claim my right *then;* but it might be possible by a present compromise to—to——. What would you think, for instance, to give me that *now?*"

"To give you what?"

"Why the —— indeed it's but a slight recompense, the—k—the salutation—the kiss. You know what tasting the head means?"

"Faix, Misther Dinis, you're a great rogue. Who'd think it indeed? Sure enough, they say smooth wather runs deep! Why one 'ud suppose butther wouldn't melt in your mouth to look at you; an' yet you want to be toyin' wid the girls! Indeed an' faix, it's a great shame for the likes o' you, that 's bint on Maynooth, to be thinkin' of coortin' at all. But wait! Upon my word, I'll have a fine story agin you, plase goodness!"

This latter threat the mischievous girl threw out with a grave face, in order to bring Denis into a more ridiculous dilemma; for she saw clearly that he laboured under a heavy struggle between timidity and gallantry. The *ruse* succeeded. Denis immediately changed his tone, and composed his face into a grave admonitory aspect, nearly equal to a homily on prudence and good conduct.

"Miss Norah," said he, "perhaps I acted wrong in carrying my trial of your disposition too far. It's a thing, however, which we who are intended for the church are ordered to do, that we may be able to make out what are called in this very book you see wid me, *cases of conscience.* But the task is now over, Miss Norah; and, in requital for your extrame good nature, I am bound to administer to you a slight lecture on decorum.

"In the first place, attend your duties regularly. I will soon be

goin' to Maynooth; an' as you are one of the girls for whom I have the greatest regard, I will expect on my return to hear a good account of you. It is possible that you will be introduced in my absence to the honours of matrimony; but even so, I know that peace, an' taciturnity, an' submission will be your most signal qualifications. You will then be in a situation equal to that of a Roman matron. As for us, Miss Norah, we are subject to the dilapidations of occasional elevation. The ambrosia of sentiment lies in our path. We care not for the terrestrialities of life, when separated from the great principle of the poet—

'Omnia vincit amor, et nos cedamus amori.'

That's Hebrew, Miss Norah!"

"They say you know a power of larnin', Misther Dinis."

"Yes, I know the seven languages; but what is all that compared to the cardinal virtues? This world is a mere bird of passage, Miss Norah; and it behoves us to be ever on the wing for futurity and premeditation. Now will you remember the excellent moral advice I have given you?"

"Indeed I will, sir," replied the roguish minx, tripping away, "particularly that you promised to marry me for nothin' if I 'd give you a kiss!"

"Give up everything like levity, Miss Norah. Attend your du"—

"You 're a fool, Misther O'Shaughnessy! Why didn't you take the kiss, an' spare the king's English?"

On making this observation she redoubled her pace, and left Denis now perfectly sensible that he was a proper subject for her mirth. He turned about, and called after her—

"Had I known that you were only in jocosity, Miss Norah, upon my classicality, I'd have given you the k—."

He now perceived that she was beyond hearing, and that it was unnecessary to finish the sentence.

These accidental meetings between Denis and the pretty daughters of the neighbouring farmers, were, somehow, very frequent. Our hero, however, was always extremely judicious in tempering his gallantry and moral advice to his young female acquaintances. In the beginning of the conversation he was sly and complimentary, afterwards he became more insinuating, then more direct in his praises of their beauty; but as his timidity on the point of character was known, the mischief-loving girls uniformly ended with a threat of exposing him to the priest, to his friends, or to the neighbours, as the whim directed them. This brought him back to his morality again; he immediately commenced an exhortation touching their religious duties, thus hoping to cover, by a trait more becoming his future destination, the little harmless *badinage* in which he had indulged.

The girls themselves frequently made him the topic of conversation, a proof that he was not altogether indifferent to them. In these little conclaves he came very well off. Among them all it was admitted, "that there was a rogue in his coat;" but this was by no means uttered in a tone of voice that betrayed any disrelish to him. On the contrary, they

Denis promoted to the dignity of a horse

Going to Maynooth

often said—and many of them with an involuntary sigh—that "he was too purty to be made a priest of;" others, that "it was a pity to make a priest of so fine a young man;" others, again, that "if he must be a priest, the colleens would be all flockin' to hear his sarmons." There was one, however, among them who never mentioned him either in praise or censure; but the rapid changes of her expressive countenance gave strong indications to an observing eye, that his name, person, and future prospects were capable of exciting a deep and intense interest in her heart.

At length he began to appear on horseback; and as he had hitherto been in the habit of taking that exercise bare-backed, now he was resolved to get into a saddle, and ride like a gentleman. Henceforth he might be seen mounted upon one of his father's horses, quite erect, and with but one spur, which was, in fact, the only spur, except the whiskey bottle, that had been in the family for three generations. This was used, he declared, for no other purpose in life than that of "stimulating the animal to the true clerical trot."

From the moment he became a mounted man, he assumed an air of less equivocal command in the family; and not only to his own relations was this authority manifested, but to his more distant acquaintances, and, in short, to the whole parish. The people now began to touch their hats to him, which act of respect he returned as much in imitation of the parish priest as possible. They also began to ask him what o'clock it was, and Denis, with a peculiar condescension, balanced still with becoming dignity, stopped, pulled out his watch, and told the hour, after which he held it for a few seconds to his ear with an experienced air, then put it in a dignified manner in his fob, touched the horse with the solitary spur, put himself more erect, and proceeded with—as he himself used to say, when condemning the pride of the curate—"all the lordliness of the parochial priest."

The notions which the peasantry entertain of a priest's learning are as extravagant as they are amusing, and such, indeed, as would be too much for the pedantic vanity inseparable from a half-educated man to disclaim. The people are sufficiently reasonable, however, to admit gradations in the extent of knowledge acquired by their pastors; but some of the figures and illustrations which they use in estimating their comparative merits are highly ludicrous. I remember a young man, who, at the age of twenty-two, set about preparing himself for the church. He lived in the bosom of a mountain, whose rugged breast he cultivated with a strength proportioned to the difficulty of subduing it. He was a powerful young fellow, quiet and inoffensive in his manners, and possessed of great natural talents. It was upon a Monday morning, in the month of June, that the school-room door opened a foot and a half wider than usual, and a huge colossal figure stalked in, with a kind of bashful laugh upon his countenance, as if conscious of the disproportion betwixt his immense size and that of the other schoolboys. His figure, without a syllable of exaggeration, was precisely such as I am about to describe. His height six feet, his shoulders of an enormous breadth, his head red as fire; his body-coat made after the manner of his grandfather's—the skirts of it being near his heels—and the buttons behind little less than eighteen

inches asunder. The pockets were cut so low, that when he stretched his arm to its full length, his fingers could not get further than the flaps; the breast of it was about nine inches longer than was necessary, so that when he buttoned it, he appeared all body. He wore no cravat, nor was his shirt collar either pinned or buttoned, but lay open as if to disclose an immense neck and chest scorched by the sun into a rich and healthy scarlet. His chin was covered with a *sole* of red dry bristles that appeared to have been clipped about a fortnight before; and as he wore neither shoe nor stocking, he exhibited a pair of legs to which Rob Roy's were drumsticks. They gave proof of powerful strength, and the thick *fell* of bristly hair with which they were covered, argued an amazing hardihood of constitution and tremendous physical energy.

"Sure, Masther, I'm comin' to school to you!" were the first words he uttered.

Now there ran beneath the master's solemnity of manner, a broad but shallow under-current of humour which agreed but poorly with his pompous display of learning. On this occasion his struggle to retain the grave and overcome the ludicrous, was unavailing. The startling fact thus uncouthly announced by so grotesque a candidate for classical knowledge, occasioned him to receive the intelligence with more mirth than was consistent with good-breeding. His pupils, too, who were hitherto afraid to laugh aloud, on observing his countenance dilate into an expression of laughter which he could not conceal, made the roof of the house ring with their mirth.

"Silence, gintlemen!" said he, "*legite, perlegite, et relegite*—study, gintlemen, study—pluck the tree of knowledge, I say, while the fruit is in season. Denny O'Shaughnessy, what are you facetious for? *Quid rides, Dionysi?* And so, Pether—is Pether your pronomen—*quo nomine gowdes?* Silence, boys!—perhaps he was at Latin before, and we'll try him—*quo nomine gowdes, Pethre?*"

A stare of awkward perplexity was the only reply he could get from the colossus he addressed.

"And so you're fished up from the Streights* at last, Pether?"

"Sir, my name's not Pether. My father's name is Paddy Doorish, but my own is Franky. I was born in Lisnagh; but we lived double as long as I can mind in the Mountain Bar."

"And, Franky, what put Latin into your head?"

"There was no Latin put into my head; I'm comin' to you for that."

"And, you graceful sprig of juvenility, have you the conscience to think that I'd undhertake to fill what you carry on your showlders on the same terms that I'd take for replenishing the head of a rasonable youth? Would you be so unjust in all the principles of correct erudition as to expect that, my worthy Man-mountain?"

"I don't expect it," said Frank; "all that's in your head wouldn't fill a corner of mine, if you go accordin' to size; but I'll *pay* you for tachin' me as much as you know yourself, an' the more I larn the less pains you'll have wid me."

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* Alluding to the Colossus of Rhodes.

Franky, however, made an amazing progress—so very rapid, indeed, that in about three years from that day he found himself in Maynooth, and in three years more was an active curate, to whom that very teacher appeared as slavishly submissive as if he had never ridiculed his vulgarity or ungainly dimensions. Poor Frank, however, in consequence of the rapid progress he made, and of the very short interval which elapsed from the period of his commencing Latin until that of his ordination, was assigned by the people the lowest grade in learning. The term used to designate the rank which they supposed him to hold, was both humorous and expressive.

"Franky," they would say, "is no *finished* priest in the larnin'; *he's but a scowdher.*"

Now a *scowdher* is an oaten cake laid upon a pair of tongs placed over the *greeshaugh*, or embers, that are spread out for the purpose of baking it. In a few minutes the side first laid down is scorched: it is then turned, and the other side is also scorched; so that it has the appearance of being baked, though it is actually quite raw within. It is a homely, but an exceedingly apt illustration, when applied to such men as Frank.

"Poor Frank," they would observe, "is but a *scowdher*—the sign of the tongs—No. 11, is upon him; so that it is asy known he never was laid to the *muddha arran*," *—that is to say, properly baked—or duly and thoroughly educated.

Denis, however, to resume more directly the thread of our narrative, on finding himself mounted, took an inveterate prejudice against walking. There was something, he thought, far more dignified in riding than in pacing slowly upon the earth, like a common man who had not the justification of Latin and Greek for becoming an equestrian. Besides this accomplishment, there were also many other habits to be broken off, and more genteel ones to be adopted in their place. These were all suggested by his rising pride; and, in sooth, they smacked strongly of that adroitness with which the Irish priest, and every priest, contrives to accomplish the purpose of feeding well through the ostensible medium of a different motive.

He accordingly took his father aside one morning, after he had eaten a more meagre breakfast than usual, and, after licking his lips, addressed him in these words:—

"I think, father, that upon considerating the consequence to which I am now entitled, and the degree of respectability which, in my own person—*in propria persona*—I communicate to the vulgarians with whom I am connected—I call them vulgarians from no derogatory motive; but you will concede yourself, that they are ignorant of the larned languages, an' consequently, though dacent enough, still in reference to Latin an' Greek, but vulgarians. Well! *Quid multis?*—I say, that taking all these things into speculation, looking at them—*veluti in speculum*—it is neither dacent nor becoming that I should ate in the manner I have done, as vulgarly

* The *Muddha Arran* is literally "the bread stick," a term in opposition to the *scowdher*. It is a forked stick with three legs, that stands opposite the fire, and supports the cake, which is placed on the edge until it is gradually baked. The *scowdher* is, for the most part, made in cases of hurry.

as themselves—that I should ate, I say, any longer without knife and fork. Neither, I announce, shall I in future drink my milk any longer, as I have, with all humility, done hitherto, out of a noggin; nor continue to disrobe my potatoes any longer without a becoming instrument. I must also have better viands to consume. You are not to be informed that I am in that situation of life, in which, from my education and other accomplishments, I must be estimated as duly qualified to ate beef and mutton instead of bacon, an' to have my *tay* breakfast instead of stir-about, which, in polite society, is designated *porridge*. You know yourself, and must acknowledge, that I'm soon likely to confer distinction and pre-eminence upon the poor illiterate, but honest creatures, with whom I am associated in the bonds of blood-relationship. If I were a dunce, or a booby, or a leather-head, the case might be different; but you yourself are well acquainted with my talents at logic and conthroversy; an' I have sound rasons and good authority, which I could quote, if necessary, for proving that nothing increases the weight of the brain, and accelerates to gravity and solidity more than good feeding. Pay attention, therefore to my words, for I expect that they will be duly observed:—buy me a knife and fork; and when I get them, it's not to lay them past to rust, you consave. The beef and mutton must follow; and in future I'm resolved to have my *tay* breakfast. There are geese, and turkeys, and pullets enough about the yard, and I am bent on accomplishing myself in the art of carving them. I'm not the man now to be placed among the other riff-raff of the family over a basket of potatoes, wid a black clerical coat upon me, and a noggin of milk under my arm! I tell you the system must be changed: the schoolmaster is abroad, and I'll tolerate such vulgarity no longer. Now saddle the horse till I ride across the bog to Pether Rafferty's Station, where I'm to sarve mass: plase heaven, I'll soon be able to say one myself, and give you all a lift in spirituals—ehem!"

"Throth, Dinny, I b'lieve you're right, avick; and——"

"*Vick* me no longer, father—that's another thing I forgot. It's full time that I should be *sirred;* and if my own relations won't call me *Sir* instead of Dinny, it's hardly to be expected that strangers will do it. I wish to goodness you had never stigmatised me wid so vulgar an epithet as Dinny. The proper word is Dionysius; and, in future, I'll expect to be called Misther Dionysius."

"Sure, I or your mother needn't be *sirrin'* you, Dinny?"

"I haven't made up my mind as to whether I'll demand that proof of my respectability from you and my mother, or not; but on this I'm immovable, that instead of Dinny, you must, as I said, designate me Dionysius."

"Well, well, avourneen, I suppose only it's right you wouldn't be axin' us; but I'm sure your poor mother will never be able to get her tongue about Dionnisis, it's so long and larned a word."

"It *is* a larned word, no doubt; but she must persevere until she's able to masther it. I wouldn't for three tenpennies that the priest would hear one of you call me Dinny; it would degradate me very much in his estimation. At all events, if my mother cannot manage the orthography of Dionysius, let it be Denis, or anything but that signature of vulgarity,

Dinny. Now, father, you won't neglect to revale what I 've ordered to the family ?"

"No, indeed, I will not, avick—I mane Dionnisis, avourneen—I 'll tell them everything as you ordhered ; but as to Dionnisis, I 'm cock sure that poor Mave will never be able to get her ould tongue about so new-fangled a piece of larnin' as that is. Well, well, this knowledge bates the world !"

When the horse was saddled, and Dionysius on his way with all due pomp to the Station, old Denis broke the matter to his wife.

"Mave, achora," said he, "I have sthrange news to tell you : sure Dionnisis is goin' to make himself a gintleman."

"Sure what ?"

"Dionnisis, our son Dionnisis, is goin' to make himself a gintleman ; he 'll ate no longer widout a knife and fork."

"Saints about us !," exclaimed Mave, rising and looking with alarm into her husband's face—"saints about us, Denis, what is 't ails you ? Sure there would be nothin' wrong wid you about the head, Denis ? or may be it 's a touch of a faver you've got, out riddling that corn bare-headed, yistherday ? I remimber the time my aunt Bridget tuck the scarlet faver, she begun to rave and spake foolish in the same way."

"Why, woman, if your aunt Bridget had a faver made up of all the colours in the rainbow, I tell you I 'm spakin' sinse ! Our son Dionnisis proved himself a gintleman out in the garden wid me about an hour ago."

"I suppose so, Denis," she replied, humouring him, for she was still doubly convinced that he laboured under some incipient malady, if not under actual insanity ; "an' what son is *this*, Dinny ? I 've never heard of *him* before."

"Our son Denis, woman alive ! You must know he 's not to be called Dinny or Dinis any more, but Dionnisis ; he 's to begin atin' wid a knife an' fork to-morrow ; we must get him beef and mutton, and a tay break-fast. He says it 's not fair play in any one that 's so deep read in the larnin' as he is, to ate like a vulgarian, or to peel his phatics wid his fingers, an' him knows so much Latin an' Greek ; an' my sowl to happi-ness but he 'll stick to the gintlemanly way of livin', so far as the beef, an' mutton, and tay is consarned."

"He will ! An', Dinis O'Shaughnessy, who has a betther right to turn gintleman, nor the gorsoon that studied for that ? Isn't it proud you ought to be that he has the spirit to think of sich things ?"

"I 'll engage, Mave, on that point you'll find him spirited enough ; for my part, I don't begrudge him what he wants ; but I heard the people say, that no man 's a gintleman who 's not *College-bred ;* and you know he 's not that yet."

"You forget that he has gentle blood in his veins, Denis. There was a day when my family, the Magennises, held their heads up ; and Kolum-kill says that the same time is to come back agin to all the ould families. Who knows if it 's altogether from *himself* he 's takin' to the beef an' mutton, but from *prophecy ;* he knows what he 's about, I 'll warrant him. For our part, it 's not right for us to cross him in it ; it 's for the good of the church, no doubt, an' we might lose more by a *blast* upon the

corn or the cattle, than he'd ate the other way. That's my dhrame out that I had last night about him. I thought we were all *gother* somewhere that I can't rightly remimber; but anyhow there was a great *sight* of people in it, an' high doins goin' an in the atin way. I looked about me, an' seen ever so many priests dressed all like the Protestant clargy; our Dinis was at the head of them, wid a three-cocked hat, an' a wig upon him; he was cuttin' up beef an' mutton at the rate of a weddin', an' dhrinkin' wine in metherfuls.

"'Musha, Dinis,' says myself, 'what's all this for?'

"'Why,' says he, 'it's all for the good of the church an' the faithful. I'm now Archbishop of the county,' says he; 'the Protestants are all banished, an' we are in their place.'

"The sorra one o' myself all this time but thought he was a priest still; so says I, 'Dinny, you're a wantin' to anoint Paddy Diarmud, who's given over, an' if you don't make haste, you won't *overtake* him?'

"'He must wait then till mornin', says Dinny; 'or if he chooses to die against my will, an' the will o' the church, let him take the quensequences. We're wealthy now.'

"I was so much frightened at the kind of voice that he spoke to me in, that I awoke; an' sure enough, the first thing I heard was the fizzin' o' bacon on the pan. I wondered who could be up so early, an' puttin' my head through the door, there was Dinny busy at it, wid an ould knife in one hand, an' an iron skiver in the other, imitatin' a fork.

"'What are you doin' so early, Dinny?' says I.

"'I'm practisin',' says he.

"'What for?' says I.

"'Oh, I'm practisin',' says he, back again, 'go to bed; I'm practisin' for the church, an' the Station that's to be in Pether Rafferty's to-day.'

"Now, Dinny, between you an' me, that dhrame didn't come for nothin'. So give the gorsoon his way, an' if he chooses to be a gintleman, why let him; he'll be the more honour to thim that reared him."

"Thrue for you, indeed, Mave; he always had a high spirit ever since he was intinded for the *robes*, and would have his own way and will in whatever he took into his head, right or wrong, as cleverly as if he had the authority for it."

"An' so he ought, seein' he wasn't to be slavin' at the spade, like the rest o' the family. The ways o' them that have great larnin' as he has, isn't like other people's ways—they must be humoured, and have their own will, otherwise what 'ud they be betther than their neighbours?"

The other arrangements laid down by Denis, touching his determination not to be addressed so familiarly by his brothers and sisters, were next discussed in this conversation, and of course, the same prejudice in his favour was manifested by his indulgent parents. The whole code of his injunctions was subsequently disclosed to the family in all its extent and rigour. Some of them heard it with surprise, and others with that kind of dogged indignation evinced by those who are in some degree prepared for the nature of the communication about to be laid before them. Altogether the circumstances in which it placed them were peculiar and embarrassing. The Irish peasant can seldom bear to have the tenderness

of domestic affection tampered with, whether from pride, caprice, or any other motive not related to his prejudices. In this instance the strongest feelings of the O'Shaughnessys were brunted, as it were in hostile array against each other; and although the moral force on each side was nearly equal, still the painful revulsion produced by Denis's pride, as undervaluing their affection, and substituting the cold forms of artificial life for the warmth of honest hearts like theirs, was, in the first burst of natural fervour, strongly, and somewhat indignantly expressed.

Denis had been their pride, the privileged person among them—the individual whose talents were to throw lustre upon a nameless and unknown family; the future priest—the embryo preacher of eminence—the resistless controversialist—the holy father confessor—and perhaps, for with that vivacity of imagination peculiar to the Irish, they could scarcely limit his exaltation—perhaps the bishop of a whole diocese. Had not the Lord Primate himself been the son of as humble a man? "And who knows," said his youngest and fairest sister, who of all the family was most devoted to him, "but Dinny might yet be a primate?" And as she spoke, the tear of affection, pride, and enthusiasm glistened in her eye. Denis, therefore, had been much, even in his youth, to their simple hearts, and far more to their hopes and expectations, than he was in all the pride of his petty polemics; but when he, before whose merits, both real and imaginary, every heart among them bowed as before the shrine of a tutelar saint, turned round, ere the destined eminence he aimed at was half attained, and laid upon their fervent affection the icy chain of pride and worldly etiquette—the act was felt keenly and unexpectedly as the acute spasm of some sudden malady.

The father and mother, however, both defended him with great warmth; and by placing his motives in that point of view which agreed best with their children's prejudices, they eventually succeeded in reconciling his brothers and sisters in some degree to the necessity of adopting the phraseology he proposed—that they might treat him with suitable respect in the eye of the world.

"It 's proud of him we ought to be," said his father, "and delighted that he has sich a risin' spirit; an' sure the more respect is paid to him, the greater credit he will be to ourselves."

"But, sure he has no right," said his eldest brother, "to be settin' up for a gintleman till he 's priested. I 'm willin' enough to *Sir* him, only that it cuts me more than I'll say, to think that I must be callin' the boy that I'd spill the last dhrop of my blood for, afther the manner of a sthranger; and besides," he added, "I'm not clear but the neighbours will be passin' remarks upon us, as they did when you and he used to be arguin'."

"I'd like to see them that 'ud turn it into a joke," said his father; "I would let them know that Dinis O'Shaughnessy's dog is neither to be made or meddled wid in a disrespectful manner, let alone his son. We are not widout friends and connections that 'ud take our quarrel upon them in his defince, if there was a needcessity for it; but there will not, for didn't my heart lep the other day to my throat wid delight, when I saw Larry Neil put his hand to his hat to him, comin' up the Esker

upon the mare; and may I never do an ill turn, if he didn't answer the bow to Larry, as if he was the priest of the parish already. It's the wondher of the world how he picks up a jinteel thing any how, an' ever did, since he was the hoith o' that."

"Why," said the mother, "what a norration yez rise about thratin' the boy as every one like him ought to be thrated. Wait till ye see him a parish priest, and then ye'll be comin' round him to get your daughters to keep house for him, and your sons edicated and made priests of; but now that the child takes a ginteel relish for beef and mutton, and wants to be respected, ye are mane an' low spirited enough to grumble about it."

"No, mother," said his youngest sister, bursting into tears, "I'd beg it for him, sooner nor he should want; but I can't bear to be callin' my brother Dinny—*Sir*—like a stranger. It looks as if *I* didn't love him, or as if *he* was forgettin' us, or carin' less about us nor he used to do."

This, in fact, was the root and ground of the opposition which Denis's plan received at the hands of his relations; it repressed the cordial and affectionate intercourse which had hitherto subsisted between them; but the pride of life, and, what is more, the pride of an office which ought always to be associated with humility, had got into his heart; the vanity of learning, too, thin and shallow though it was, inflated him; and the effect of both was a gradual induration of feeling—an habitual sense of his own importance, and a notion of supreme contempt for all who were more ignorant than himself.

After the first impression of pain and mortification had passed away from the minds of his brothers and sisters, it was, however, unanimously admitted that he was right; and ere long, no other feeling than one of good-humour, mingled with drollery, could be perceived among them. They were clearly convinced, that he claimed no more from strangers than was due to him; but they certainly were not prepared to hear that he had brought the exaction of personal respect so completely and unexpectedly home to themselves as he had done. The thing, too, along with being unreasonable, was awkward and embarrassing in the extreme; for there is a kind of feeling among brothers and sisters, which, though it cannot be described, is very trying to their delicacy and shamefacedness under circumstances of a similar nature. In humble life you will see a married woman who cannot call her husband after his Christian name; or a husband, who, from some extraordinary restraint, cannot address his wife, except in that distant manner which the principle I allude to dictates, and habit confirms.

Denis, however, had overcome this modesty, and felt not a whit too shamefaced to arrogate to his own learning and character, the most unhesitating manifestation of their deference and respect, and they soon scrupled not to pay it.

The night of that evening was pretty far advanced, when a neighbour's son, named Condy Callaghan, came to inform the family, that Denis, when crossing the bog on his way home, had rode into a swamp, from which he found much difficulty in extricating himself, but added, "the mare is sunk to the saddle-skirts, and cannot get out widout men and ropes." In a short time a sufficient number of the neighbours were

summoned together, and proceeded to the animal's relief. Denny's importance, as well as his black dress, was miserably tarnished; he stood, however, with as dignified an air as possible, and, in a bombastic style, proceeded to direct the men as to the best manner of relieving her.

"Asy, Dinny," said his brother, with a good-humoured but significant smile—"larning may be very good in its place; in the mane time, lave the business in our hands rather than in your own head—or if you have e'er a scrap of Greek or Latin that 'ud charm ould Sobersides out, where was the use of sendin' for help?"

"I say," replied Denis, highly offended, "I'll not tolerate vulgarity any longer; you must *larn* to address me in a more polite style. If the animal—that purblind quadruped—walked into the mire, by what logic can you produce an association between her blindness and my knowledge of Latin and Greek? But why do I degradate my own consequence by declaiming to you an eulogium upon logic? It 's only throwing pearls before swine."

"I didn't mane to offind you," replied the warm-hearted brother; "I meant you no offince in what I said, so don't take it ill—we 'll have Sobersides out in no time—and barrin an' extra rubbin' down to both of you, neither will be the worse, I hope."

"As to what you hope or despair, Brian, it could produce no other impression on the subtilty of my fancy, than pity for the man who could compare me—considering the brilliancy of my career, and the extent of my future speculations—to a quadruped like Sobersides, by asserting that I, as well as she, ought to be *rubbed down!* And were it not that I confront the offince with your own ignorance, I would expose you before the townland in which we stand; ay, to the whole parish—but I spare you, out of respect to my own consequence."

"I ax your pardon," said the brother, "I won't offind you in the same way again. What I said, I said to you as I thought a brother might—I ax your pardon!"

There was a slight agitation approaching to a tremor in his brother's voice, that betokened sorrow for his own impropriety in too familiarly addressing Denis, and perhaps regret that so slight and inoffensive a jest should have been so harshly received in the presence of strangers, by a brother who had in reality been his idol. He reflected upon the conversation held on that morning in the family, touching Denny's prerogative in claiming a new and more deferential deportment from them all; and he could not help feeling that there was in it a violation of some natural principle long sacred to his heart. But the all-pervading and indefinite awe felt for that sacerdotal character into which his brother was about to enter, subdued all, and reconciled him to those inroads upon violated Nature, despite her own voice, loudly expressed as it was in his bosom.

When the family was once more assembled that night, Denis addressed them in a tone, which implied that the *odium theologicum* had not prevented the contrition expressed by his brother from altogether effacing from his mind the traces of his offence.

"Unworthy of respect," he proceeded, "as it appears by some of my

relations I am held," and he glanced at his brother, "yet I beg permission to state, that our worthy parochial priest, or I should rather say, the Catholic Rector of this parish, is of a somewhat different habit of thought or contemplation. I dined with him to-day—ehem—dined with him upon an excellent joint of mutton—I say, father—the *mutton* was good—and with his proud pertinacious curate, whom I do not at all relish; whether, as Homer says—I enumerate his scurrilous satire, or his derogatory insinuations. His parochial pastor and spiritual superior is a gentleman, or as Horace says, *homo factus ad unguem*—which is paraphrastically—every inch a gentleman—or more literally a gentleman to the tops of his fingers—ehem—hem—down to the very nails—as it were.

"Well—having discussed that—*observatis observandis, quoad sacerdotem*—having passed my eulogium upon Father Finnerty—upon my word and credit though, punch is *prima facie* drink—and father, that brings me to remember an omission which I committed in my dialogue with you this morning. I forgot to say, that after my dinner, in the manner I expounded to you, it will be necessary to have a tumbler of punch—for as Father Finnerty says, there is nothing which so effectually promotes the organs of digestion. Now, my introduction of *this*, in the middle of my narrative, is what the hypercritics call a *Parenthesis*, which certainly betrays no superficial portion of literary perusal on my part, if you could at all but understand it as well as Father Finnerty, our worthy parochial incumbent does. As for the curate, should I ever come to authority in the Irish hierarchy, I shall be strongly disposed to discountenance him; if it were only for his general superciliousness of conduct. So there 's another clause disposed of.

"Well—to proceed—I say I have intelligence regarding myself, that will be by no means unsavoury to you all. Father Finnerty and I had, about an hour before dinner this day, a long and tedious conversation, the substance of which was my future celebrity in the church. He has a claim on the Bishop, which he stated to me will be exercised in my favour, although there are several candidates for it in this parish, not one of whom, however, is within forty-five degrees of being so well qualified for college as myself. Father, is there not a jar—an *amphora*—as that celebrated satirist Juvenile, has it—an *amphora*—in the chimly-brace, filled with liquor—get it, and let us inter animosity—I 'll not be long a member of the domestic circle with you—so, upon the basis of the communication I have to make, let us, as I said, become sextons to animosity and care. 'Dionysius,' said Father Finnerty, addressing me, which shows, at all events, that I am not so unimportant as some of my friends would suppose—'*Dionysius*,' said he *inter nos*—'between you and me, I believe I have it in my power to send up a candidate to Maynooth. 'Tis true, I never make a promise—*nunquam facio votum*, except in certain cases, or in other words, Dionysius, *exceptis excipiendis*—in which is the *essence*, as it were, of a proper vow.' In the mean time he proceeded—'With regard to your prospects in the church, I can only say in the first place, and I say it with much truth and sincerity—*that I'm badly off for a horse;* that, however, is, as I said, *inter nos—sub sigillo*. The old

*garran* I have is fairly worn out—and, not that I say it, your father has as pretty a colt as there is within the bounds—*intra terminos parochii mei*, within the two ends of my parish: *verbum sat*—which is, I 'm sure you are a sensible and discreet young man. Your father, Dionysius, is a parishioner whom I regard and esteem to the highest degree of comparison, and you will be pleased to report my eulogium to himself and to his dacent family—and proud may they be of having so brilliant a youth among them as you are—ehem!'

"Now, you may all think that this was plain conversation; but I had read too much for that. In fact, it was *logic*—complate, convincing logic, every word of it. So I responded to him in what is called in the books, the *argumentum ad crumenam;* although I question but it ought to be designated here the *argumentum ad bestiam.* Said I, 'Father Finnerty, the colt, my paternal property, which you are pleased to eulogise so highly, is a good one; it was designed for myself when I should come out on the mission; however, I will undertake to say, if you get me into Maynooth, that my father on my authority will *lend* you the colt to-morrow, and the day of his claiming it will be dependent upon the fulfilment of your promise or *votum.*'

"'*Signatum et sigillatum est*,"—said he, for indeed the best part of the discussion was conducted in Latin; 'and now,' he continued, 'my excellent Dionysius, nothing remains but that the colt be presented'——

——"'Lent,' I responded, correcting him, you see, even although he was the priest—'*lent*,' said I; 'and your Reverence will be good enough to give the *votum* before one or two of my friends.'

He looked at me sharply, not expecting to find such deep logic in one he conjectured to be but a *tyro.*

"'You will be a useful man in the church,' he added, 'and you deserve to be pushed on at all events. In the mean time tell your father that I 'll ride up and breakfast with him to-morrow, and he can have a friend or two to talk over the *compactum.*'

"So, father, there 's the state of the question at present; the accomplishment of the condition is dependent upon yourself."

My readers may perceive that Denis, although a pedant, was not a fool. It has been said that no man is a hero to his *valet-de-chambre;* but I think the truth of the sentiment contained in that saying is questionable. Denis, on the contrary, was nowhere so great a man as in his own chimney-corner, surrounded by his family. It was there he was learned, accomplished, profound; next to that he was great among those who, although not prejudiced in his favour by the bonds of affection, were too ignorant to discover those literary pranks which he played off, because he knew he could do so without detection. The basis, however, of his character was shrewd humour and good sense; and even at the stage of life which we have just described, it might have been evident to a close observer, that, when a proper knowledge of his own powers, joined to a further acquaintaince with the world, should enable him to cast off the boyish assumption of pedantry, a man of a keen ready intellect, and considerable penetration, would remain.

Many of my readers may be inclined to exclaim, that the character of

Denny is not to be found in real life; but they are mistaken who think so. They are not to suppose that Denis O'Shaughnessy was the same person in his intercourse with intelligent men and scholars, that he appeared among the illiterate peasantry, or his own relations. Far from it. With the former, persons like him are awkward and bashful, or modest and unassuming, according to the bent of their natural disposition. With scholars Denis made few pretensions to superior knowledge; but on the contrary, took refuge, if he dreaded a scrutiny into his acquirements, in the humblest acknowledgment of his limited reading, and total unacquaintance with those very topics on which he was, under other circumstances, in the habit of expatiating so fluently. In fact, were I to detail some of the scenes of his exhibitions as they were actually displayed, *then* I have no doubt I might be charged with colouring too highly.

When Denis had finished the oration from the chimney-corner, delivered with suitable gesticulation while he stood drying himself at the fire after the catastrophe of the swamp, a silence of some minutes followed. The promise of the colt made to the priest with such an air of authority, was a *finale* which the father did not expect, and by which he was not a little staggered.

"I could like it all very well," replied the father, "save an' except givin' away the coult that 's worth five-an'-twenty guineas, if he 's worth a *'crona-bawn*. To tell the blessed thruth, Dinis, if you had settled the business widout *that*, I 'd be betther plased."

"Just exercise your contemplation upon it for a short period," replied Denis, "and you will perceive that I stipulated to *lend* him before witnesses; and if Father Finnerty does not matriculate me into Maynooth, then do you walk down some brilliant morning or other, and take your baste by the head, direct yourself home, hold the bridle as you proceed, and by the time you 're at the rack, you 'll find the horse at the manger. I have now stated the legality of the matter, and you may act as your own subtilty of perception shall dictate. I have laid down the law, do you consider the equity."

"Why," said the father, "if I thought he would get you into"——

"Correct, quite correct: the cardinal point there is the *if*. If he does, give him the horse; but if not, reclaim the quadruped without hesitation. I am not to be kept back, if profundity and erudition can substantiate a prospect. Still, father, the easiest way is the safest, and the shortest the most expeditious."

The embarrassing situation in which the other members of the family were placed, imposed upon them a profound silence, in reference to the subject of conversation. Yet, while Denny delivered the aforesaid harangue from the chimney-corner, every eye was fixed upon him with an expression of pride and admiration which escaped not his own notice. Their deportment towards him was affectionate and respectful; but none of them could so far or so easily violate old habits as to address him according to his own wishes; they therefore avoided addressing him at all.

The next morning Father Finnerty paid them his purposed visit, and, as he had promised, arrived in time for breakfast. A few of Denis's

relations *were* assembled, and in their presence the arrangements respecting the colt and Denny's clerical prospects were privately concluded. So far everything was right; the time of Denny's departure for Maynooth was to be determined by the answer which Father Finnerty should receive from the bishop; for an examination must, of course, take place, which was to be conducted by the prelate, or by some other clergyman appointed for that purpose. This and the necessary preparation usual on such occasions, were the only impediments in the way of his departure for Maynooth, a place associated with so many dreams of that lowly ambition which the humble circumstances of the peasantry permit them to entertain.

The Irish people, I need scarcely observe, are a poor people; they are, also, very probably for the same reason, an imaginative people; at all events, they are excited by occurrences which would not produce the same vivacity of emotion which they experience, upon any other people in the world. This, after all, is but natural; a long endurance of hunger will render the coarsest food delicious; and, on the contrary, when the appetite is glutted with the richest viands, it requires a dish whose flavour is proportionably high and spicy to touch the jaded palate. It is so with our moral enjoyments. In Ireland, a very simple accession to their hopes or comforts produces an extraordinary elevation of mind, and so completely unlocks the sluices of their feelings, that every consideration is lost in the elation of the moment. At least it was so in Denis O'Shaughnessy's family upon this occasion.

No sooner had Father Finnerty received the colt, and pledged himself that Denny should have the place in Maynooth that was then vacant, than a tumultuous expression of delight burst from his family and relations. Business was then thrown aside for the day; the house was scoured and set in order, as if it were for a festival; their best apparel was put on; every eye was bright, every heart throbbed with a delightful impulse, whilst kindness and hilarity beamed from their faces. In a short time they all separated themselves among their neighbours to communicate the agreeable tidings; and the latter, with an honest participation in their happiness, instantly laid aside their avocations, and flocked to Denis O'Shaughnessy's, that they might congratulate him and his friends upon what was considered the completion of their hopes. When the day was more advanced, several of Denny's brothers and sisters returned, and the house was nearly filled with their acquaintances and relations. Ere one o'clock had passed they were all assembled, except old Denis, of whom no person could give any intelligence. Talk, loud laughter, pure poteen, and good-humour, all circulated freely; the friendly neighbour unshaved, and with his Sunday coat thrown hastily over his work-day apparel, drank to Denny's health, and wished that he might "bate all Maynewth out of the face; an' sure there's no doubt of that, any how—doesn't myself remimber him puttin' the explanations to Pasthorini before he was the bulk o' my fist?" His brothers and sisters now adopted with enthusiasm the terms of respect which he had prescribed for them through his father; he was *Sirred* and *Misthered*, and all but *Reverenced*, with a glow of affectionate triumph which they strove not to conceal. He was also overwhelmed with compliments of all hues and complexions: one

reminded him of the victory he obtained over a hedge-schoolmaster who came one Sunday a distance of fifteen miles to *sack* him in English Grammar on the chapel-green; but as the man was no classical scholar, "Sure," observed his neighbour, "I remember well that he couldn't get a word out of Misther Denis's head there but Latin; so that the poor crathur, afther travellin' fifteen long miles, had to go home agin, the show o' the world, widout undherstandin' a sintence of the larnin' that was put an him; an' so here's wishin' you health, Misther Dinis, agra, an' no fear in life but you'll be the jewel at the prachin', Sir, plase Goodness!"

Another reminded him of "how often he proved Phaidrick Murray to be an ass, and showed him how he couldn't make out the differ atween black an' white."

"Sure, an' he did," said Phadrick, scratching his head, for he was one of the first at the house; "an' no wondher, wid his long-headed screwtations from the books. Throth, his own father was the best match, barrin' Father Lawdher that was broke of his bread, he ever met wid, till he got too many for him by the Latin an' Greek."

This allusion to old Denis occasioned his absence to be noticed.

"Can nobody tell where Denis More is?" said the wife; "my gracious, but it's quare he should be from about the place this day, any way. Brian, mavourneen, did you see him goin' any where?"

"No," said Brian, "but I see him comin' down there carryin' some aitables in a basket."

Brian had scarcely ended when his father entered, bearing beef and mutton, as aforesaid, both of which he deposited upon the kitchen table, with a jerk of generosity and pride, that seemed to say, as he looked significantly at Denny—and, in fact, as he did say afterwards—"Never spare, Dinny; ate like a gintleman; make yourself as bright an' ginteel as you can; you won't want for beef an' mutton!"

Old Denis now sat down, and, after wiping the perspiration from his forehead, took the glass of poteen which the wife handed him: he held it between his finger and thumb for a moment, glanced around him upon the happy faces present, then laid it down again, fixed his eyes upon his son, and cast them once more upon the company. The affectionate father's heart was full; his breast heaved, and the large tears rolled slowly down his cheeks. By a strong effort, however, he mastered his emotion; and taking the glass again, he said in a broken voice:—

"Neighbours!—God bless yez!—God bless yez!—Dinny—Dinny—I"——

The last words he pronounced with difficulty; and drinking off his glass, set it down empty upon the table. He then rose up, and shook his neighbours by the hand—

"I am," said he, "a happy man, no doubt of it, an' we're all happy; an' it's proud any father might be to hear the account of his son, that I did of mine, as I was convoyin' Father Finnerty a piece o' the way home. 'Your son,' says he, when he took that bit of a coult out o' my hand, 'will be an honour to you all. I tell you,' says he, 'that he's nearly as good a scholar as myself, an' spakes Latin not far behind my own; an' as for a pracher,' says he, 'I can tell you that he'll be hard *farther* nor

any man I know.' He tould me them words wid his own two lips. An' surely, neighbours," said he, relapsing into strong feeling, "you can't blame me for bein' both proud an' happy of sich a son."

My readers, from the knowledge already given them of Denny's character, are probably disposed to think that his learning was thrown out on this occasion in longer words and more copious quotations than usual. This, however, was not the case; so far from that, he never displayed less pedantry, nor interspersed his conversation with fewer scraps of Latin. In fact, the proceedings of the day appeared to affect him with a tone of thought, decidedly at variance with the exuberance of joy experienced by the family. He was silent, moody, and evidently drawn by some secret reflection from the scene around him. He held a book in his hand, into which he looked from time to time, with the air of a man who balances some contingency in his mind. At length, when the conversation of those who were assembled became more loud and boisterous, he watched an opportunity of gliding out unperceived; having accomplished this, he looked cautiously about him, and finding himself not observed, he turned his steps to a glen which lay about half a mile below his father's house.

At the lowest skirt of this little valley, protected by a few spreading hawthorns, stood a small white farm-house, more immediately shaded by a close row of elder, or boor-tree, which hung over one of the gables, and covered the garden gate, together with a neat grassy seat, that was built between the gate and the gable. It was impervious to sun and rain: one of those pretty spots which present themselves on the road-side in the country, and strike the eye with a pleasing notion of comfort; especially when, during a summer shower, the cocks and hens of the little yard are seen by the traveller who takes shelter under it, huddled up in silence, the white dust quite dry, whilst the heavy shower patters upon the leaves above, and upon the dark drenched road beside him.

Under the shade of this sat an interesting girl, aged about seventeen, named Susan Connor. She was slender, and not above the middle size; but certainly, in point of form and feature, such as might be called beautiful—handsome she unquestionably was; but be that as it may, with this rustic beauty the object of Denis's stolen visit was connected. She sat knitting under the shade of elder which we have described, a sweet picture of innocence and candour. Our hero's face, as he approached her, was certainly a fine study for any one who wished to embody the sad and the ludicrous. Desperate was the conflict between pedantry and feeling which he experienced. His manner appeared more pompous and affected than ever; yet was there blended with the flush of approaching triumph as a candidate, such woe-begone shades of distress flitting occasionally across his features, as rendered his countenance inscrutably enigmatical.

When the usual interchange of preliminary conversation had passed, Denis took his seat beside her on the grassy bench; and after looking in several directions, and giving half a dozen hems, he thus accosted her:—

"Susan, cream of my affections, I may venture to conjecture that the fact, or *factum*, of my being the subject of a *fama clamosa* to-day, has not yet reached your ears?"

"Now, Denis, you are at your deep larning from the books again. Can't you keep your reading for them that undherstands it, an' not be spakin' so Englified to a simple girl like me?"

"There is logic in that same, however. Do you know, Susan, I have often thought that, provided always you had resaved proper instruction, you would have made a first-rate classical scholar."

"So you tould me, Denis, the Sunday evening we exchanged the promise. But sure when you get me, I can larn it. Won't you tache me, Denis?"

She turned her laughing eyes archly at him as she spoke, with a look of joy and affection: it was a look, indeed, that staggered for the moment every ecclesiastical resolution within him. He returned her glance, and ran over the features of her pure and beautiful countenance for some minutes; then, placing his open hand upon his eyes, he seemed buried in reflection. At length he addressed her:—

"Susan, I am thinking of that same Sunday evening on which we exchanged the hand-promise. I say, Susan,—*dimidium animæ meæ*—I am in the act of meditating upon it; and sorry am I to be compel—to be under the neces—to be reduced, I say—that is *redactus* in the larned langua——: in other words—or terms, indeed, is more elegant—in other terms, then, Susan, I fear that what I just now alluded to, touching the *fama clamosa* which is current about me this day, will render that promise a rather premature one on both our parts. Some bachelors in my situation might be disposed to call it foolish, but I entertain a reverence—a veneration for the feelings of the feminine sex, that inclines me to use the mildest and most classical language in divulging the change that has taken place in my fortunes since I saw you last."

"What do you mane, Denis?" inquired Susan, suddenly ceasing to knit, and fixing her eyes upon him with a glance of alarm.

"To be plain, Susy, I find that Maynooth is my destination. It has been arranged between my father and Docthor Finnerty, that I must become a labourer in the vineyard; that is, that I must become a priest, and cultivate the grape. It's a sore revelation to make to an amorous maiden; but destiny will be triumphant:—

"Tempora mutantur, nos et mutamur in illis."

The poor girl suddenly laid down the work on which she had been engaged, her face became the colour of ashes, and the reply she was about to make died upon her lips. She again resumed her stocking, but almost instantly laid it down a second time, and appeared wholly unable either to believe or comprehend what he said.

"Denis," she at length asked, "did you say that all is to be over between us?"

"That was my insinuation," replied Denis. "The fact is, Susy, that destiny is adverse; clean against our union in the bonds of matrimonial ecstacy. But, Susy, my charmer, I told you before that you were not destitute of logic, and I hope you will bear this heavy visitation as becomes a philosopher."

"Bear it, Denis! How ought I to bear it, after your saying and

swearing, too, that neither father, nor mother, nor priest, nor any body else would make you desart me?"

"But, Susan, my nightingale, perhaps you are not aware that there is an authority in existence to which father, mother, and all must knuckle down. That is the church, Susan. Reflect—*dulce decus meum*—that the power of the church is able to loose and unloose, to tie and untie, to forgive and to punish, to raise to the highest heaven, or to sink to the profoundest Tartarus. That power, Susan, thinks proper to claim your unworthy and enamoured swain as one of the brightest Colossuses of her future glory. The Irish hierarchy is plased to look on me as a luminary of almost superhuman brilliancy and coruscation: my talents she pronounces to be of the first magnitude; my eloquence classical and overwhelming, and my learning only adorned by that poor insignificant attribute denominated by philosophers unfathomability!—hem!—hem!"

"Dennis," replied the innocent girl, "you sometimes speak that I can undherstand you; but you oftener spake in a way that I can hardly make out what you say. If it 's a thing that my love for you, or the solemn promise that passed between us, would stand in your light, or prevint you from higher things as a priest, I am willing to—to—to give you up, whatever I may suffer. But you know yourself, that you brought me on from time to time undher your promise, that nothing would ever lead you to lave me in sorrow an' disappointment. Still, I say, that —— But, Denis, is it thrue that you could lave *me* for *any thing?*"

The innocent confidence in his truth expressed by the simplicity of her last question, staggered the young candidate; that is to say, her words, her innocence, and her affection sank deeply into his heart.

"Susan," he replied, "to tell the blessed truth, I am fairly dilemma'd. My heart is in your favour; but—but—hem—you don't know the prospect that is open to me. You don't know the sin of keeping back such a—a—a—galaxy as I am from the church. I say, you don't know the *sin* of it. *That's* the difficulty. If it was a common case it would be nothing! but to keep back a person like me—a *rara avis in terris*—from the priesthood, is a sin that requires a great dale of interest with the Pope to have absolved."

"Heaven above forgive me!" exclaimed the artless girl. "In that case I wouldn't for the riches of the wide earth stand between you and God. But I didn't know that before, Denis; and if you had tould me, I think, sooner than get into sich a sin I 'd struggle to keep down my love for you, even although my heart should break."

"Poor darling," said Denis, taking her passive hand in his, "and would it go so hard with you? Break your heart! Do you love me so well as that, Susan?"

Susan's eyes turned on him for a moment, and the tears which his question drew forth gave it a full and a touching reply. She uttered not a word, but after a few deep sobs wiped her eyes, and endeavoured to compose her feelings.

Denis felt the influence of her emotions; he remained silent for a short time, during which, however, ambition drew in the background all those dimly splendid visions that associate themselves with the sacerdotal func-

tions, in a country where the people place no bounds to the spiritual power of their pastors.

"Susan," said he, after a pause, "do you know the difference between a Christian and a hathen?"

"Between a Christian an' a hathen? Why aren't hathens all sinners?"

"Very right. Faith, Susan, you would have shone at the classics. You see, *dilecta cordis mei*, or, *cordi meo*, for either is good grammar—you see, Susan, the difference between a Christian and a hathen is this:—a Christian bears disappointments with fortitude—with what is denominated Christian fortitude; whereas, on the contrary, a hathen doesn't bear disappointments at all. Now, Susan, it would cut me to the heart to find that you would become a hathen on this touching and trying occasion."

"I'll pray to God, Denis. Isn't that the way to act under afflictions?"

"Decidedly. There is no other legitimate mode of quelling a heart-ache. And, Susan, when you go to supplication you are at liberty to mention my name—no, not yet; but if I were once consecrated you might. However, it is better to sink this; say nothing about me when you pray, for, to tell you truth, I believe you have as much influence above—*super astra*—as I have. There is one argument which I am anxious to press upon you. It is a very simple but a very respectable one after all. I am not all Ireland. You will find excellent good husbands even in this parish. There is, as the old proverb says, as good fish in the *say* as ever were caught. Do you catch one of them. For me, Susan, the vineyard claims me; I must, as I said, cultivate the grape. We must, consequently—hem!—we must—hem! hem!—consequently strive to forget—hem!—I say, to forget each other. It is a trial—I know—a desperate visitation, poor fawn, upon your feelings; but, as I said, destiny will be triumphant. What is decreed, is decreed—I must go to Maynooth."

Susan rose, and her eyes flashed with an indignant sense of the cold-blooded manner in which he advised her to select another husband. She was an illiterate girl, but the purity of her feeling supplied the delicacy which reading and a knowledge of more refined society would have given her.

"Is it from *your* lips, Denis," she said, "that I hear sich a mane and low-minded an advice? Or do you think that with my weak, and I now see, foolish heart, settled upon you, I could turn round and fix my love upon the first that might axe me? Denis, you promised before God to be mine, and mine only; you often said and swore that you loved me above any human being; but I now see that you only intended to lead me into sin and disgrace, for indeed, and before God, I don't think—I don't—I don't—believe that you *ever* loved me."

A burst of grief, mingled with indignation and affliction, followed the words she had uttered. Denis felt himself called on for a vindication, and he was resolved to give it.

"Susan," he returned, "your imagination is erroneous. By all the classical authors that ever were written, you are antipodially opposed to facts. What harm is there, seeing that you and I can never be joined in

wedlock—what harm is there, I say, in recommending you another husb——"

Susan would hear no more. She gathered up her stocking and ball of thread, placed them in her apron, went into her father's house, shut and bolted the door, and gave way to violent grief. All this occurred in a moment, and Denis found himself excluded.

He did not wish, however, to part from her in anger; so, after having attempted to look through the keyhole of the door, and applied his eye in vain to the window, he at length spoke.

"Is there anybody within but yourself, Susy?"

He received no reply.

"I say, Susy—*dilecta juventutis meæ*—touching the recommendation—now don't be crying—touching the recommendation of another husband, by all the classics that ever were mistranslated, I meant nothing but the purest of consolation. If I did, may I be reduced to primeval and aboriginal ignorance! But you know yourself, that they never prospered who prevented a *rara avis* like me from entering the church—from labouring in the vineyard, and cultivating the grape. Don't be hathenish; but act with a philosophy suitable to so dignified an occasion—Farewell! *Macte virtute*, and be firm. I swear again by all the class——"

The appearance of a neighbour caused him to cut short his oath. Seeing that the man approached the house, he drew off, and returned home, more seriously affected by Susan's agitation than he was willing to admit even to himself.

This triumph over his affection was, in fact, only the conquest of one passion over another. His attachment to Susan Connor was certainly sincere, and ere the prospects of his entering Maynooth were unexpectedly brought near him, by the interference of Father Finnerty, his secret purpose all along had been to enter with her into the state of matrimony, rather than into the church. Ambition, however, is beyond all comparison the most powerful principle of human conduct, and so Denny found it. Although his unceremonious abandonment of Susan appeared heartless and cruel, yet it was not effected on his part without profound sorrow and remorse. The two principles, when they began to struggle in his heart for supremacy, resembled the rival destinies of Cæsar and Mark Anthony. Love declined in the presence of ambition; and this, in proportion as all the circumstances calculated to work upon the strong imagination of a young man naturally fond of power, began to assume an appearance of reality. To be in the course of a few years a *bonâ fide* priest; to possess unlimited sway over the fears and principles of the people; to be endowed with spiritual gifts to he knew not what extent; and to enjŏy himself as he had an opportunity of seeing Father Finnerty and his curate do, in the full swing of convivial pleasure, upon the ample hospitality of those who, in addition to this, were ready to kiss the latchet of his shoes—were, it must be admitted, no inconsiderable motives in influencing the conduct of a person reared in an humble condition of life. The claims of poor Susan, her modesty, her attachment, and her beauty—were all insufficient to prevail against such a host of opposing

motives; and the consequence, though bitter, and subversive of her happiness, was a final determination on the part of Denny, to acquaint her, with a kind of ex-officio formality, that all intercourse upon the subject of their mutual attachment must cease between them. Notwithstanding his boasted knowledge, however, he was ignorant of sentiment, and accordingly confined himself, as I have intimated, to a double species of argument; that is to say, first, the danger and sin of opposing the wishes of the church which had claimed him, as he said, to labour in the vineyard; and secondly, the undoubted fact, that there were plenty of good husbands besides himself in the world, from some one of which, he informed her, he had no doubt, she could be accommodated.

In the meantime, her image, meek, and fair, and uncomplaining, would from time to time glide into his imagination; and the melody of her voice send its music once more to his vacillating heart. He usually paused then, and almost considered himself under the influence of a dream; but ambition, with its train of shadowy honours, would immediately present itself, and Susan was again forgotten.

When he rejoined the company, to whom he had given the slip, he found them all gone, except about six or eight whom his father had compelled to stop for dinner. His mind was now much lighter than it had been before his interview with Susan, nor were his spirits at all depressed by perceiving that a new knife and fork lay glittering upon the dresser for his own particular use.

"Why, thin, where have you been all this time," said the father, "an' we wantin' to know whether you'd like the mutton to be boiled or roasted?"

"I was soliloquising in the glen below," replied Denny, once more resuming his pedantry, "meditating upon the transparency of all human events; but as for the beef and mutton, I advise you to boil the beef, and roast the mutton, or *vice versâ*, to boil the mutton, and roast the beef. But I persave my mother has anticipated me, and boiled them both with that flitch of bacon that 's playing the vagrant in the big pot there. *Tria juncta in uno*, as Horace says in the Epodes, when expatiating upon the Roman Emperors—ehem!"

"Misther Denis," said one of those present, "maybe you'd tell us upon the watch, what the hour is, if you plase, Sir; myself never can know right at all, except by the shadow of the sun from the corner of our own gavel."

"Why," replied Denis, pulling it out with much pomp of manner, "it 's just half-past two to a quarter of a minute, and a few seconds."

"Why thin what a quare thing entirely a watch is," the other continued; "now what makes you hould it to your ear, Misther Denis, if you plase?"

"The efficient cause of that, Larry, is, that the drum of the ear, you persave—the drum of the ear—is enabled to catch the intonations produced by the machinery of its internal operations—otherwise the fact of applying it to the ear would be unnecessary—altogether unnecessary."

"Dear me! see what it is to have the knowledge, any way! But isn't it quare how it moves of itself like a livin' crathur? How is that, Misther Denis?"

"Why, Larry,—ehem—you see the motions of it are—that is—the works or operations, are all continually going; and sure it is from that explanation that we say a watch *goes* well. That 's more than you ever knew before, Larry."

"Indeed it surely is, Sir, an' is much oblaged to you, Misther Denis; sure if I ever come to wear a watch in my fob, I 'll know something about it, anyhow."

For the remainder of that day Denis was as learned and consequential as ever; his friends, when their hearts were opened by his father's hospitality, all promised him substantial aid in money, and in presents of such articles as they supposed might be serviceable to him in Maynooth. Denny received their proffers of support with suitable dignity and gratitude. A scene of bustle and preparation now commenced among them, nor was Denny himself the least engaged; for it somehow happened, that notwithstanding his profound erudition, he felt it necessary to read night and day in order to pass with more *éclat* the examination which he had to stand before the bishop ere his appointment to Maynooth. This ordeal was to occur upon a day fixed for the purpose, in the ensuing month; and indeed Denis occupied as much of the intervening period in study as his circumstances would permit. His situation was, at this crisis, certainly peculiar. Every person related to him in the slightest degree contrived to revive their relationship; his former schoolfellows, on hearing that he was actually destined to be of the church, renewed their acquaintance with him, and those who had been servants to his father, took the liberty of speaking to him upon the strength of that fact. No child, to the remotest shade of affinity, was born, for which he did not stand godfather; nieces and nephews thickened about him, all with remarkable talents, and many of them, particularly of the nieces, said to be exceedingly genteel—very thrifty for their ages, and likely to make excellent housekeepers. A strong likeness to himself was also pointed out in the features of his nephews, one of whom had his born nose—another his eyes—and a third again had his brave high-flown way with him. In short, he began to feel some of the inconveniences of greatness; and, like it, to be surrounded by cringing servility and meanness. When he went to chapel he was beset, and followed from place to place, by a retinue of friends who were all anxious to secure to themselves the most conspicuous marks of his notice. It was the same thing in fair or market; they contended with each other who should do him most honour, or afford to him and his father's immediate family the most costly treat, accompanied by the grossest expressions of flattery. Every male infant born among them was called Dionysius; and every female one Susan, after his favourite sister. All this, to a lad like Denis, already remarkable for his vanity, was very trying; or rather, it absolutely turned his brain, and made him probably as finished a specimen of pride, self-conceit, and domineering arrogance, mingled with a kind of lurking humorous contempt for his cringing relations, as could be displayed in the person of some shallow but knavish prime minister, surrounded by his selfish sycophants, whom he encourages and despises.

At home he was idolised—overwhelmed with respect and deference. The slightest intimation of his wish was a command to them; the beef,

and fowl, and mutton, were at hand in all the variety of culinary skill, and not a soul in the house durst lay a hand upon his knife and fork but himself. In the morning, when the family were to be seen around the kitchen table at their plain but substantial breakfast, Denis was lording it in solitary greatness over an excellent breakfast of tea and eggs in another room.

It was now, too, that the king's English, as well as the mutton, was carved and hacked to some purpose; epithets prodigiously long and foreign to the purpose were pressed into his conversation, for no other reason than because those to whom he spoke could not understand them; but the principal portion of his time was devoted to study. The bishop, he had heard, was a sound scholar, and exceedingly scrupulous in recommending any to Maynooth, except such as were well versed in the preparatory course. Independently of this, he was anxious, he said, to distinguish himself in his examination, and, if possible, to sustain as high a character with the bishop and his fellow-students, as he did among the peasantry of his own neighbourhood.

At length the day approached. The bishop's residence was not distant more than a few hours' ride, and he would have sufficient time to arrive there, pass his examination, and return in time for dinner. On the eve of his departure, old Denis invited Father Finnerty, his curate, and about a dozen relations and friends, to dine with him the next day; when—Denis having surmounted the last obstacle to the accomplishment of his hopes—their hearts could open without a single reflection to check the exuberance of their pride, hospitality, and happiness.

I have often said to my friends, and I now repeat it in print, that after all, there is no people bound up so strongly to each other by the ties of domestic life, as the Irish. On the night which preceded this joyous and important day, a spirit of silent but tender affection dwelt in every heart of the O'Shaughnessys. The great point of interest was Denis. He himself was serious, and evidently laboured under that strong anxiety so natural to a youth in his circumstances. A Roman Catholic bishop, too, is a personage looked upon by the people with a kind of feeling that embodies in it awe, reverence, and fear. Though, in this country, an humble man possessing neither the rank in society, outward splendour, nor the gorgeous profusion of wealth and pomp which characterise a prelate of the Established Church; yet it is unquestionable that the gloomy dread, and sense of formidable power with which they impress the minds of the submissive peasantry, immeasurably surpass the more legitimate influence which any Protestant dignitary could exercise over those who stand, with respect to him, in a more rational and independent position.

It was not surprising that Denis, who practised upon ignorant people that petty despotism for which he was so remarkable, should now, on coming in contact with great spiritual authority, adopt his own principles, and relapse from the proud pedant into the cowardly slave. True it is that he presented a most melancholy specimen of independence in a crisis where moral courage was so necessary: but his dread of the coming day was judiciously locked up in his own bosom. His silence and apprehension were imputed to the workings of a mind learnedly engaged in arrang-

ing the vast stores of knowledge with which it was so abundantly stocked; his moody picture of the bishop's brow; his reflection that he was going before so sacred a person, as a candidate for the church, with his heart yet redolent of earthly affection for Susan Connor; his apprehension that the bishop's spiritual scent might sagaciously smell it out, were all put down by the family to the credit of uncommon learning, which, as his mother observed truly, "often makes men do quare things." His embarrassments, however, in as much as they were ascribed by them to wrong causes, endeared him more to their hearts than ever. Because he spoke little, neither the usual noise nor bustle of a large family disturbed the silence of the house: every word was uttered that evening in a low tone, at once expressive of tenderness and respect. The family supper was tea, in compliment to Denis; and they all partook of it with him. Nothing humbles the mind, and gives the natural feelings their full play, so well as a struggle in life, or the appearance of its approach.

"Denis," said the father, "the time will come when we won't have you at all among us; but, thank goodness, you 'll be in a betther place."

Denis heard him not, and consequently made no reply.

"They say Maynewth 's a tryin' place, too," he continued, "an' I 'd be sorry to see him pulled down to an atomy, like some of the scarecrows that come out of it. I hope you 'll bear it betther."

"Do you speak to me?" said Denis, awaking out of a reverie.

"I do, *Sir*," replied the father; and as he uttered the words the son perceived that his eyes were fixed upon him with an expression of affectionate sorrow and pride.

The youth was then in a serious mood, free from the dominion of that learned *mania* under which he had so frequently signalised himself: the sorrow of his father, and a consciousness of the deep affection and unceasing kindness which he had ever experienced from him, joined to a recollection of their former friendly disputes and companionship, touched Denny to the quick. But the humility with which he applied to him the epithet *Sir*, touched him most. What! thought he—ought my affectionate father to be thrown to such a distance from a son, who owes everything to his love and goodness! The thought of his stooping so humbly before him smote the boy's heart, and the tears glistened in his eyes.

"Father," said he, "you have been kind and good to me, beyond my deserts; surely then I cannot bear to hear you address me in that manner, as if we were both strangers. Nor while I am with you, shall any of you so address me. Remember that I am still *your* son and their brother."

The natural affection displayed in this speech soon melted the whole family into tears—not excepting Denis himself, who felt that grief which we experience when about to be separated for the first time from those we love.

"Come over, avourneen," said his mother, drying her eyes with the corner of her check apron: "come over, acushla machree, an' sit beside me; sure although we're sorry for you, Denis, it's proud our hearts are of you, an' good right we have, a suilish! Come over, an' let me be near you as long as I can, any way."

Denis placed himself beside her, and the proud mother drew his head over upon her bosom, and bedewed his face with a gush of tears.

"They say," she observed, "that it's sinful to shed tears when there's no occasion for grief; but I hope it's no sin to cry when one's heart is full of somethin' that brings them to one's eyes, whether they will or not."

"Mave," said the father, "*I'll* miss him more nor any of you: but sure he'll often send letters to us from Maynewth, to tell us how he's gettin' on; an' we'll be proud enough, never fear."

"You'll miss me, Denis," said his favourite sister, who was also called Susan; "for you'll find no one in Maynewth that will keep your linen so white as I did: but never fear, I'll be always knittin' you stockins; an' every year I'll make you half-a-dozen shirts, an' you'll think them more natural nor other shirts, when you know they came from your own home—from them that you love! Won't you, Denis?"

"I will, Susy; and I will love the shirts for the sake of the hands that made them."

"And I won't allow Susy Connor to help me as she used to do: they'll be all Alley's sewin' and mine."

"The poor colleen—listen to her!" exclaimed the affectionate father: "indeed you will, Susy; ay, and hem his cravats, that we'll send him ready made an' all."

"Yes," replied Denis, "but as to Susy Connor—hem—why, upon considera—he—hem—upon second thoughts, I don't see why you should prevent her from helping you; she's a neighbour's daughter, and a well-wisher, of whose prosperity in life I'd always wish to hear."

"The poor girl's very bad in her health, for the last three weeks," observed his other sister, Alley: "she has lost her appetite, an' is cast down entirely in her spirits. You ought to go an' see her, Denis, before you set out for the college, if it was only on her dacent father's account. When I was tellin' her yisterday that you wor to get the bishop's letter for Maynewth to-morrow, she was in so poor a state of health that she nearly fainted. I had to give her a drink of wather, and sprinkle her face with it. Well, she's a purty crathur an' a good girl, an' was always that, dear knows!"

"Denis achree," said his mother, somewhat alarmed, "are you any way unwell? Why your heart's batin' like a new catched chicken! Are you sick, acushla; or are you used to this?"

"It won't signify," replied Denis, gently raising himself from his mother's arms, "I will sit up, mother; it's but a sudden stroke or two of *tremor cordis*, produced probably by having my mind too much upon one object."

"I think," said his father, "he will be the betther of a little drop of the poteen made into punch, an' for that matter we can all take a sup of it; as there's no one here but ourselves, we will have it snug an' comfortable."

Nothing resembles an April day more than the general disposition of the Irish people. When old Denis's proposal for the punch was made, the gloom which hung over the family—originating, as it did, more in

joy than in sorrow—soon began to disappear. Their countenances gradually brightened, by and by mirth stole out, and ere the punch had accomplished its first round, laughter, and jest, and good-humour—each, in consequence of the occasion, more buoyant and vivacious than usual, were in full play. Denis himself, when animated by the unexcised liquor, threw off his dejection, and ere the night was half spent, found himself in the highest region of pedantry.

"I would not," said he, "turn my back upon any other candidate in the province, in point of preparatory excellence and ardency of imagination. I say, sitting here beside you, my worthy and logical father, I would not retrograde from any candidate for the honours of the Catholic Church in the province—in the kingdom—in Europe; and it is not improbable but I might progradiate another step, and say Christendom at large. And now what's a candidate? Father, you have some apprehension in you, and are a passable second-hand controversialist—what's a candidate? Will you tell me?"

"I give it up, Denis; but you'll tell us."

"Yes, I will tell you. Candidate signifies a man dressed in fustian; it comes from *candidus*, which is partly Greek, partly Latin, and partly Hebrew. It was the learned designation for Irish linen, too, which in the time of the Romans was in great request at Rome; but it was changed to signify fustian, because it was found that everything a man promised on becoming a candidate for any office, turned out to be only fustian when he got it."

"Denis, avourneen," said his mother, "the greatest comfort myself has is to be thinkin' that when you're a priest, you can be sayin' masses for my poor sinful sowl."

"Yes, there is undoubtedly comfort in that reflection; and depend upon it, my dear mother, that I'll be sure to *clinch* your masses in the surest mode. I'll not fly over them like Camilla across a field of potato oats, without discommoding a single walk, as too many of my worthy brethren—I mane as too many of those whose worthy brother I will soon be—do in this present year of grace. I'm no fool at the Latin, but, as I'm an unworthy candidate for Maynooth, I cannot even understand every fifteenth word they say when reading mass, independently of the utter scorn with which they treat those two scholastic old worthies, called Syntax and Prosody."

"Denis," said the father, "nothing would give me greater delight than to be present at your first mass, an' your first sarmon; and next to that would I like to be stumpin' about wid a dacent staff in my hand, maybe wid a bit of silver on the head of it, takin' care of your place when you'd have a parish."

"At all events, if you're not with me, father, I'll keep you comfortable wherever you'll be, whether in this world or the other; for, plase goodness, I'll have some influence in both.—When I get a parish, however, it is not improbable that I may have occasion to see company; the neighbouring gentlemen will be apt to relish my society, particularly those who are addicted to conviviality; and our object will be to render ourselves as populous as possible; now, whether in that case it would be

compatible—but never fear, father, whilst I have the means, you or one of the family shall never want."

"Will you let the people be far behind in their dues, Denis?" inquired Brian.

"No, no—leave that point to my management. Depend upon it, I'll have them like mice before me—ready to run into the first auger-hole they meet. I'll collect lots of oats, and get as much yarn every year as would clothe three regiments of militia, or for that matther, of dragoons. I'll appoint my stations, too, in the snuggest farmers' houses in the parish, just as Father Finnerty, our worthy parochial priest, ingeniously contrives to do. And, to revert secondarily to the collection of the oats, I'll talk liberally to the Protestant Boddaghs; give the Presbyterians a learned homily upon civil and religious freedom; make hard hits with them at that INCUBUS, the Established Church; and, never fear, but I shall fill bag after bag with good corn from many of both creeds."

"That," said Brian, "will be givin' them the bag to hould in airnest."

"No, Brian, but it will be makin' them fill the bag when I hold it, which will be better still."

"But," said Susan, "who'll keep house for you? You know that a priest can't live widout a housekeeper."

"That, Susy," replied Denis, "is, and will be the most difficult point on which to accomplish anything like a satisfactory determination. I have nieces, enough, however. There's Peter Finnegan's eldest daughter, Mary, and Hugh Tracy's Ailsey—(to whom he added about a dozen and a half more)—together with several yet to be endowed with existence, all of whom will be brisk candidates for the situation."

"I don't think," replied Mrs. O'Shaughnessy, "that you'll ever get any one who'd be more comfortable about you nor your own ould mother. What do you think of takin' myself, Denis?"

"Ay, but consider the accomplishments in the culinary art—*in re vel in arte culinaria*—which will be necessary for my housekeeper to know. How would you, for instance, dress a dinner for the bishop if he happened to pay me a visit, as you may be certain he will? How would you make pies and puddings, and disport your fancy through all the varieties of roast and boil? How would you dress a fowl that it would stand upon a dish as if it was going to dance a hornpipe? How would you amalgamate the different *genera* of wine with boiling fluid and crystallized saccharine matter? How would you dispose of the various dishes upon the table according to high life and mathematics? Wouldn't you be too old to bathe my feet when I'd be unwell? Wouldn't you be too old to bring me my whey in the morning as soon as I'd awake, perhaps with a severe head-ache, after the plenary indulgence of a clerical compotation? Wouldn't you be too old to sit up till the middle of the nocturnal hour, awaiting my arrival home? Wouldn't you be——"

"Hut, tut, that's enough, Denny, I'd never do at all. No, no, but I'll sit a clane dacent ould woman in the corner upon a chair that you'll get made for me. There I'll be wid my pipe and tobacco, smokin' at my ase, chattin' to the sarvints, and sometimes discoorsin' the neighbours

that'll come to inquire for you, when they'll be sittin' in the kitchen waitin' till you get through your office. Jist let me have that, Dinny achora, and I'll be as happy as the day's long."

"And I on the other side," said his father, naturally enough struck with the happy simplicity of the picture which his wife drew, "on the other side, Mave, a snug, dacent ould man, chattin' to you across the fire, proud to see the bishop an' the gintlemen about him. An' I wouldn't ax to be taken into the parlour at all, except, maybe, when there would be nobody there but yourself, Denis; an' that your mother an' I would go into the parlour to get a glass of punch, or if it could be spared, a little taste of wine for novelty."

"And so you shall both of you—you, father, at one side of the hob, and my mother here at the other, the king and queen of my culinarian dominions. But practise taciturnity a little—I'm visited by the muse, and must indulge in a strain of vocal melody—hem—'tis a few lines of my own composure, the offspring of a moment of inspiration by the nine female Heliconians; but before I incipiate, here's to my own celebrity to-morrow, and afterwards all your healths!"

He then proceeded to sing in his best style a song composed, as he said, by himself, but which, as the composition was rather an eccentric one, we decline giving.

"Denis," said his brother, "you 'll have great sport at the Stations."

"Yes, Brian, most inimitable specimen of fraternity, I do look into the futurity of a station with great complacency. Hem—in the morning I rise up in imagination, and after reading part of my office, I and my curate—*ego et coadjutor meus*—or if I get a large parish, perhaps I and my two curates—*ego et coadjutores mei*—order our horses, and of a fine calm summer morning we mount them as gracefully as three throopers. The sun is up, and of coorse the moon is down, and the glitter of the light, the sparkling of the dew, the canticles of the birds, and the melodious cawing of the crows in Squire Grimshaw's rookery——"

"Why, Denis, is it *this* parish you'll have?"

"Silence, silence, till I complate my rural ideas—in some gentleman's rookery at all events; the thrush here, the blackbird there, the corn-craik chanting its varied note in another place, and so on. In the meantime we reverend sentimentalists advance, gazing with odoriferous admiration upon the prospect about us, and expatiating in the purest of Latin upon the beauties of unsophisticated nature. When we meet the peasants going out to their work, they put their hands to their hats for us; but as I am known to be the parochial priest, it is to me the salutation is directed, which I return with the air of a man who thinks nothing of such things; but, on the contrary, knows them to be his due. The poor creatures of curates, you must know, don't presume to speak of themselves, but simply answer whenever I condescend to propose conversation, for I'll keep them down, never fear. In this edifying style we proceed—I a few steps in advance, and they at a respectful distance behind me, the heads of their horses just to my saddle skirts—my clerical boots as brilliant as the countenance of Phœbus, when decked with rosy smiles, theirs more subordinately polished, for there should be gradations in all things, and

humility is the first of virtues in a Christian curate. My bunch of goold sales stands out proudly from my anterior rotundity, for by this time, plase God, I 'll be getting frolicsome and corpulent ; they with only a poor bit of ribbon, and a single two-penny kay, stained with verdigrace. In the meantime, we come within sight of the wealthy farmer 's house, wherein we are to hold the edifying solemnity of a station. There is a joyful appearance of study and bustle about the premises ; the peasantry are flocking towards it, dressed in their best clothes ; the proprietors of the mansion itself are running out to try if we are in appearance, and the very smoke disports itself hilariously in the air, and bounds up as if it was striving to catch the first glimpse of the clargy. When we approach, the good man—*pater-familias*—comes out to meet us, and the good woman—*mater-familias*—comes curtseying from the door to give us the *kead millia failtha.* No sooner do we persave ourselves noticed, than out comes the Breviary, and in a moment we are at our morning devotions. I being the rector, am particularly grave and dignified. I do not speak much, but am rather sharp, and order the curates, whom I treat however with great respect before the people, instantly to work. This impresses those who are present with awe and reverence for us all, especially for Father O'Shaugnessy *himself*—(that's me.)—I then take a short turn or two across the floor, silently perusing my office, after which I lay it aside and relax into a little conversation with the people of the house, to show that I can conciliate by love as readily as I can impress them with fear ; for, you see, *divide et impera* is as aptly applied to the passions as to maxims of state policy—ehem. I then go to my tribunal, and first hear the man and woman and family of the house, and afther them the other penitents according as they can come to me.

" Thus we go on absolving in great style, till it is time for the matutinal meal—vulgarly called breakfast ; when the whiskey, eggs, toast, and tea as strong as Hercules, with ham, fowl, beef-steaks, or mutton-chops, all pour in upon us in the full tide of hospitality. Helter-skelter, cut and thrust, right and left, we work away, till the appetite reposes itself upon the cushion of repletion : and off we go once more, full and warm, to the delicate employment of adjudicating upon sin and transgression, until dinner comes, when, having despatched *as many as possible* —for the quicker we get through them the better—we set about despatching what is always worth a ship-load of such riff-raff—videlicet, a good and extensive dinner. Oh, ye pagan gods of eating and drinking, Bacchus and——let me see who the presiding deity of good feeding was in the Olympian synod—as I'm an unworthy candidate I forget that topic of learning ; but no matter, *non constat.* Oh, ye pagan professors of ating and drinking, Bacchus, Epicurus, and St. Heliogabalus, Anthony of Padua, and Paul the Hermit, who poached for his own venison, St. Tuck, and St. Tak'em, St. Drinkem, and St. Eatem, with all ye other reverend worthies, who bore the blushing honours of the table thick upon your noses, come and inspire your unworthy candidate, while he essays to chant the praises of a Station dinner !

" Then, then, does the priest appropriate to himself his due share of enjoyment. Then does he, like Elias, throw his garment of inspiration

upon his coadjutors. Then is the goose cut up, and the farmer's distilled Latin is found to be purer and more edifying than the distillation of Maynooth.

> 'Drink deep, or taste not the Pierian spring,
> A little learning is a dangerous thing.'

And so it is, as far as this inspiring language is concerned. A Station dinner is the very pinnacle of a priest's happiness. There is the fun and frolic; then does the lemon-juice of mirth and humour come out of their reverences, like secret writing, as soon as they get properly warm. The song and the joke, the laugh and the leer, the shaking of hands, the making of matches, and the projection of weddings, the nipping on the ribs, and the pressing of the toes, the poking and the joking—och, I must conclude, or my brisk fancy will dissolve in the deluding vision! Here's to my celebrity to-morrow, and may the Bishop catch a Tarthar in your son, my excellent and logical father!—as I tell you among ourselves he will do. Mark me, I say it, but it 's *inter nos*, it won't go further; but should he trouble me with profundity, I'll make a *ludibrium* of him."

"But you forget the weddings and christenings, Denis; you 'll have great sport at them too."

"I can't remember three things at a time, Brian: but you are mistaken, however, I had them snug in one corner of my cranium. The weddings and the christenings! do you think I'll have nothing to do in them, you *stultus*, you?"

"But, Denis, is there any harm in the priests' enjoying themselves, and they so holy as we know they are?" inquired his mother.

"Not the least in life; considering what severe fasting, and great praying they have; besides it 's necessary for them to take something to put the sins of the people out of their heads, and that 's one reason why they are often jolly at Stations."

"My goodness, what light Denis can throw upon anything!"

"Not without deep study, mother; but let us have another portion of punch each, afther which I'll read a Latin *De Profundis*, and we'll go to bed. I must be up early to-morrow; and, Brian, you 'll please to have the black mare saddled and my spur brightened as jinteely as you can, for I must go in as much state and grandeur as possible." Accordingly, in due time, after hearing the *De Profundis*, which Denis read in as sonorous a tone, and as pompous a manner, as he could assume, they went to bed for the night, to dream of future dignities for their relative.

When Denis appeared the next morning, it was evident that the spirit of prophecy in which he had contemplated the enjoyments annexed to his ideal station on the preceding night, had departed from him. He was pale and anxious, as in the early part of the previous evening. At breakfast, his very appetite treacherously abandoned him, despite the buttered toast and eggs which his mother forced upon him with such tender assiduity, in order, she said, to make him stout against the Bishop. Her solicitations, however, were vain; after attempting to eat to no purpose, he arose and began to prepare himself for his journey. This, indeed, was a work of considerable importance, for, as they had no looking-glass, he

was obliged to dress himself over a tub of water, in which, since truth must be told, he saw a very cowardly visage. In due time, however, he was ready to proceed upon his journey, apparelled in a new suit of black that sat stiffly and awkwardly upon him, crumpled in a manner that enabled any person, at a glance, to perceive that it was worn for the first time.

When he was setting out, his father approached him with a small jug of holy water in his hand, "Denis," said he, "I think you won't be the worse of a sprinkle of this;" and he accordingly was about to shake it with a little brush over his person, when Denis arrested his hand.

"Easy, father," he replied, "you don't remember that my new clothes are on. I'll just take a little with my fingers, for you know one drop is as good as a thousand."

"I know that," said the father, "but on the other hand you know it's not *lucky* to refuse it."

"I didn't refuse it," rejoined Denis, "I surely took a *quantum suff.* of it with my own hand."

"It was very near a refusal," said the father, in a disappointed and somewhat sorrowful tone; "but it can't be helped now. I'm only sorry you put it and *quantum suff.* in connexion at all. *Quantum suff.* is what Father Finnerty says, when he will take no more punch; and it doesn't argue respect in you to make as little of a jug of holy wather as he does of a jug of punch."

"I'm sorry for it too," replied Denis, who was every whit as superstitious as his father; "and to atone for my error, I desire you will sprinkle me all over with it—clothes and all."

The father complied with this, and Denis was setting out, when his mother exclaimed, "Blessed be them above us, Denis More! Look at the boy's legs! There's luck! Why one of his stockins has the wrong side out, and it's upon the right leg too! Well, this will be a fortunate day for you, Denis, any way; the same thing never happened myself, but something good followed it."

This produced a slight conflict between Denis's personal vanity and superstition; but on this occasion superstition prevailed: he even felt his spirits considerably elevated by the incident, mounted the mare, and after jerking himself once or twice in the saddle, to be certain that all was right, he touched her with the spur, and set out to be examined by the Bishop, exclaiming as he went, "Let his lordship take care that I don't make a *ludibrium* of him."

The family at that moment all came to the door, where they stood looking after, and admiring him, until he turned a corner of the road, and left their sight.

Many were the speculations entered into during his absence, as to the fact, whether or not he would put down the bishop in the course of the examination; some of them holding that he could do so if he wished; but others of them denying that it was possible for him, inasmuch as he had never received holy orders.

The day passed, but not in the usual way, in Denis More O'Shaughnessy's. The females of the family were busily engaged in preparing for the

dinner, to which Father Finnerty, his curate, and several of their nearest and wealthiest friends had been invited; and the men in clearing out the stables and other offices for the horses of the guests. Pride and satisfaction were visible on every face, and that disposition to cordiality and to the oblivion of everything unpleasant to the mind, marked, in a prominent manner, their conduct and conversation. Old Denis went, and voluntarily spoke to a neighbour, with whom he had not exchanged a word, except in anger, for some time. He found him at work in the field, and advancing with open hand and heart, he begged his pardon for any offence he might have given him.

"My son," said he, "is goin' to Maynooth; and as he is a boy that we have a good right to be proud of, and as our friends are comin' to ate their dinner wid us to-day, and as—as my heart is too full to bear ill will against any livin' sowl, let alone a man that I know to be sound at the heart, in spite of all that has come between us—I say, Darby, I forgive you, and I expect pardon for my share of the offence. There's the hand of an honest man—let us be as neighbours ought to be, and not divided into parties and factions against one another, as we have been too long. Take your dinner wid us to-day, and let us hear no more about ill-will and unkindness."

"Denis," said his friend, "it ill becomes you to spake first. 'Tis I that ought to do that, and to do it long ago too; but you see, somehow, so long as it was to be decided by blows between the families, I'd never give in. Not but that *I* might do so, but my sons, Denis, wouldn't hear of it. Throth I'm glad of this, and so will they too; for only for the honour and glory of houldin' out, we might be all friends through other long ago. And I'll tell you what, we couldn't do better, the two factions of us, nor join and thrash them Haigneys that always put between us."

"No, Darby, I tell you, I bear no ill-will, no bad thoughts agin any born Christian this day, and I won't hear of that. Come to us about five o'clock: we're to have Father Finnerty, and Father Molony, his curate: all friends, man, all friends; and Denny, God guard him this day, will be home, afther passin' the Bishop, about four o'clock."

"I always thought that gorsoon would come to somethin'. Why it was wondherful how he used to discoorse upon the chapel-green, yourself and himself: but he soon left you behind. And how he sealed up poor ould Dixon, the parish clark's mouth, at Barny Boccagh's wake. God rest his soul! It was talkin' about the Protestant church they wor. 'Why,' said Misther Denis, 'you ould termagant, can you tell me who first discovered your church?' The dotin' ould crathur began of hummin' and hawin', and advisin' the boy to have more sense. 'Come,' said he, 'you ould canticle, can you answer? But for fear you can't, I'll answer for you. It was the divil discovered it, one fine mornin' that he went to get an appetite, bein' in delicate health.' Why, Denis, you'd tie all that wor present wid a rotten sthraw."

"Darby, I ax your pardon over agin for what came between us; and I see now betther than I did, that the fault of it was more mine nor yours. You'll be down surely about five o'clock?"

"I must go and take this beard off o' me, and clane myself; and I may as well do that now: but I'll be down, never fear."

"In throth the boy was always bright!—ha, ha, ha!—and he sobered Dixon?"

"Had him like a judge in no time."

"Oh, he could do it—he could do that, at all times. God be wid you, Darby, till I see you in the evenin'."

"*Bannaght lhath*, Denis, an' I'm proud we're as we ought to be."

About four o'clock, the expected guests began to assemble at Denis's; and about the same hour one might perceive Susan O'Shaugnessy running out to a stile a little above the house, where she stood for a few minutes, with her hand shading her eyes, looking long and intensely towards the direction from which she expected her brother to return. Hitherto, however, he could not be discovered in the distance, although scarcely five minutes elapsed during the intervals of her appearance at the stile to watch him. Some horsemen she did notice; but after straining her eyes eagerly and anxiously, she was enabled only to report, with a dejected air, that they were their own friends coming from a distant part of the parish, to be present at the dinner. At length, after a long and eager look, she ran in with an exclamation of delight, saying—

"Thank goodness, he's comin' at last; I see somebody dressed in black ridin' down the upper end of Tim Marly's *boreen*, an' I'm sure an' certain it must be Denis, from his dress!"

"I'll warrant it is, my colleen," replied her father; "he said he'd be here before the dinner would be ready, an' it's widin a good hour of that. I'll thry myself."

He and his daughter once more went out; but, alas! only to experience a fresh disappointment. Instead of Denis, it was Father Finnerty; who, it appeared, felt as anxious to be in time for dinner, as the young candidate himself could have done. He was advancing at a brisk trot, *not* upon the colt which had been presented to him, but upon his old nag, which seemed to feel as eager to get at Denis's oats, as its owner did to taste his mutton.

"I see, Susy, we'll have a day of it, plase goodness," observed Denis to the girl: "here's Father Finnerty, and I wouldn't for more nor I'll mention that he had staid away; and I hope the *cowjuther* will come as well as himself. Do you go in, aroon, and tell them he's comin', and I'll go and meet him."

Most of Denis's friends were now assembled, dressed in their best apparel, and raised to the highest pitch of good humour; for no man who knows the relish with which Irishmen enter into convivial enjoyments, can be ignorant of the remarkable flow of spirits which the prospect of an abundant and hospitable dinner produces among them.

Father Finnerty was one of those priests who constitute a numerous species in Ireland; regular, but loose and careless in the observances of his church, he could not be taxed with any positive neglect of pastoral duty. He held his stations at stated times and places, with great exactness, but when the severer duties annexed to them were performed, he relaxed into the boon companion, sang his song, told his story, laughed his laugh, and occasionally danced his dance, the very *beau idéal* of a rough, shrewd, humorous divine, who, amidst the hilarity of convivial mirth, kept an eye to his own interest, and sweetened the severity with

which he exacted his "dues" by a manner at once jocose and familiar. If a wealthy farmer had a child to christen, his reverence declined baptizing it in the chapel, but as a proof of his marked respect for its parents, he and his curate did them the honour of performing the ceremony at their own house. If a marriage was to be solemnized, provided the parties were wealthy, he adopted the same course, and manifested the same flattering marks of his particular esteem for the parties, by attending at their residence; or if they preferred the pleasure of a journey to his own house, he and his curate accompanied them home from the same motives. This condescension, whilst it raised the pride of the parties, secured a good dinner and a pleasant evening's entertainment for the priests, enhanced their humility exceedingly, for the more they enjoyed themselves, the more highly did their friends consider themselves honoured. This mode of life might, one would suppose, lessen their importance and that personal respect which is entertained for the priests by the people; but it is not so—the priests can, the moment such scenes are ended, pass, with the greatest aptitude of habit, into the hard gloomy character of men who are replete with profound knowledge, exalted piety, and extraordinary power. The sullen frown, the angry glance, or the mysterious allusion to the omnipotent authority of the church, as vested in their persons, joined to some unintelligible dogma, laid down as their authority, are always sufficient to check anything derogatory towards them, which is apt to originate in the unguarded moments of conviviality.

"Plase your Reverence, I'll put him up myself," said Denis to Father Finnerty, as he took his horse by the bridle, and led him towards the stable, "and how is *my* cowlt doin' wid you, Sir?"

"Troublesome, Denis; he was in a bad state when I got him, and he'll cost me nearly his price before I have him thoroughly broke."

"He was pretty well broke wid me, I know," replied Denis, "and I'm afear'd you've given him into the hands of some one that knows little about horses. Mave," he shouted, passing the kitchen door, "here's Father Finnerty—go in Docthor, and put big Brian Buie out o' the corner; for goodness' sake *Eximnicate* him from the hob—an' sure you have power to do that any way."

The priest laughed, but immediately assuming a grave face, as he entered, exclaimed—

"Brian Buie, in the name of the forty-seventh proposition of Euclid's Elements—in the name of the cube and square roots of Algebra, Mathematics, Fluxions, and the doctrine of all essential spirits that admit of proof—in the name of Nebuchadanezar the divine, who invented the convenient scheme of taking a cold collation under a hedge—by the power of that profound branch of learning, the Greek Digamma—by the authority of true Latin, *primo*, of Beotian Greek, *secundo*, and of Arabian Hebrew, *tertio;* which is, when united by the skill of profound erudition, *primo, secundo, tertio;* or, being reversed by the logic of illustration, *tertio, secundo, primo. Commando te in nomine botteli potheeni boni drinkandi his ædibus, hac nocte, inter amicos excellentissimi amici mei, Dionisii O'Shaughnessy, quem beknavari ex excellentissimo colto ejus, causa pedantissimi filii ejus, designati ecclesiæ, patri, sed nequaquam deo, nec*

*naturæ, nec ingenio;—commando te, inquam, Bernarde Buie, surgere, stare, ambulare, et decedere e cornero isto vel hobbo, quo nunc sedes!* Yes, I command thee, Brian Buie, who sit upon the hob of my worthy and most excellent friend and parishioner, Dennis O'Shaughnessy, to rise, to stand up before your spiritual superior, to walk down from it, and to tremble as if you were about to sink into the earth to the neck, but no further;—before the fulminations of him who can wield the thunder of that mighty Salmoneus, his holiness the Pope, successor to St. Peter, who left the servant of the Centurion earless, I command and objurgate thee, sinner as thou art, to vacate your seat on the hob for the man of sanctity, whose legitimate possession it is, otherwise I shall send you like that worthy archbishop, the aforesaid Nebuchadanezar, to live upon leeks for seven years in the renowned kingdom of Wales, where the leeks may be seen to this day! Presto!"

These words, pronounced with a grave face, in a loud, rapid, and sonorous tone of voice, startled the good people of the house, who sat mute and astonished at such an exordium from the worthy pastor; but no sooner had he uttered Brian Buie's name, giving him, at the same time, a fierce and authoritative look, than the latter started to his feet, and stepped down in a kind of alarm towards the door. The priest immediately placed his hand upon his shoulder in a mysterious manner, exclaiming—

"Don't be alarmed, Brian, I have taken the force of the *anathema* off you; your power to sit, or stand, or go where you please, is returned again. I wanted your seat, and Denis desired me to excommunicate you out of it, which I did, and you accordingly left it without your own knowledge, consent, or power; I transferred you to where you stand, and you had no more strength to resist me, than if you were an infant not three hours in the world!"

"I ax God's pardon, an' your Reverence's," said Brian, in a tremour, "if I have given offince. Now, bless my soul! what's this? As sure as I stand before you, neighbours, I know neither act nor part of how I was brought from the hob at all—neither act nor part! Did any of yez see me lavin' it; or how did I come here—can ye tell me?"

"Paddy," said one of his friends, "did you see him?"

"The sorra one o' me seen him," replied Paddy: "I was lookin' at his Reverence, sthrivin' to know what he was sayin'."

"Pether, did you?" another inquired.

"Me! I never seen a stim of him till he was standin' alone on the flure! Sure, when he didn't see or find himself goin', how could another see him?"

"Glory be to God!" exclaimed Mave; "one ought to think well what they say, when they spake of the clargy, for they don't know what it may bring down upon them, sooner or later!"

"Our Denis will be able to do that yet," said Susan to her elder sister.

"To be sure he will, *girsha*, as soon as he's ordained—every bit as well as Father Finnerty," replied Mary.

The young enthusiast's countenance brightened as her sister spoke: her dark eye became for a minute or two fixed upon vacancy, during which

it flashed several times; until, as the images of her brother's future glory passed before her imagination, she became wrapt—her lip quivered—her cheek flushed into a deeper colour, and the tears burst in gushes from her eyes.

The mother, who was now engaged in welcoming Father Finnerty—a duty which the priest's comic miracle prevented her from performing sooner—did not perceive her daughter's agitation, nor, in fact, did any one present understand its cause. Whilst the priest was taking Brian Buie's seat, she went once more to watch the return of Denis; and while she stood upon the stile, her father, after having put up the horse, entered the house, "to keep his Reverence company."

"An' pray, Docthor," he inquired, "where is Father Molony, that he 's not wid you? I hope he won't disappoint us; he 's a mighty pleasant gintleman of an evenin', an', barrin' your Reverence, I don't know a man tells a better story."

"He entreated permission from me this morning," replied Father Finnerty, "and that was leave to pay a visit to the Bishop; for what purpose I know not, unless to put in a word in season for the first parish that becomes vacant."

"Throth, an' he well desarves a parish," replied Denis; "an' although we 'd be loath to part wid him, still we'd be proud to hear of his promotion."

"He 'll meet Denis there," observed Susan, who had returned from the stile: "he'll be apt to be present at his trial wid the Bishop; an' maybe he 'll be home along wid him. I'll go an' thry if I can see them agin;" and she flew out once more to watch their return.

"Now, Father Finnerty," said an uncle of Denis's, "you can give a good guess at what a dacent parish ought to be worth to a parish priest?"

"Mrs. O'Shaughnessy," said the priest, "is that fat brown goose suspended before the fire, of your own rearing?"

"Indeed it is, plase your Reverence; but as far as good male an phaties could go for the last month, it got the benefit of them."

"And pray, Mrs. O'Shaughnessy, have you many of the same kidney? I only ask for information, as I said to Peery Hacket's wife, the last day I held the Station in Peery's. There was just such another goose hanging before the fire; but, you must know, the cream of the joke was, that I had been after coming from the confessional, as hungry as a man could conveniently wish himself; and seeing the brown fat goose before the fire, just as that is, why my teeth, Mave, began to get lachrymose. Upon my Priesthood, it was such a goose as a priest's corpse might get up on its elbow to look at, and exclaim, '*avourneen machree*, it 's a thousand pities that I 'm not living, to have a cut at you!'—ha, ha, ha! God be good to old Friar Hennessy, I have that joke from him.

"'Well, Mrs. Hacket,' says I, as I was airing my fingers at the fire, 'I dare say you haven't another goose like this about the house? Now, tell me, like an honest woman, have you any of the same kidney?—I only ask for information.'

"Mrs. Hacket, however, told me she believed there might be *a few* of

the same kind straggling about the place, but said nothing further upon it, until the Saturday following, when her son brings me down a pair of the fattest geese I ever cut up for my Sunday's dinner. Now, Mrs. O'Shaughnessy, wasn't that doing the thing *dacent?*"

"Well, well, Docthor," said Denis, "that was all right; let Mave alone, an' maybe she 'll be apt to find out a pair that will match Mrs. Hacket's. Not that I say it, but she doesn't like to be outdone in anything."

"Docthor, I was wishin' to know, Sir," continued the uncle of the absent *candidate*, "what the value of a good parish might be."

"I think, Mave, there's a discrepancy between the goose and the shoulder of mutton. The fact is, that if it be a disputation between them, as to which will be roasted first, I pronounce that the goose will have it. It 's now, let me see, half past four o'clock, and, in my opinion, it will take a full half hour to bring up the mutton. So Mave, if you 'll be guided by your priest, advance the mutton towards the fire about two inches, and keep the little *girsha* basting steadily, and then you 'll be sure to have it rich and juicy."

"Docthor, wid submission, I was wantin' to know what a good parish might be ——"

"Mike Lawdher, if I don't mistake, you ought to have good grazing down in your meadows at Ballinard. What will you be charging for a month or two's grass for this colt I 've bought from my dacent friend, Denis O'Shaughnessy, here? And, Mike, be rasonable upon a poor man, for we're all poor, being only tolerated by the state we live under, and ought not, of coorse, to be hard upon one another."

"An' what did he cost you, Docthor?" replied Mike, answering one question by another; "what did you get for him, Denis?" he continued, referring for information to Denis, to whom, on reflection, he thought it more decorous to put the question.

Denis, however, felt the peculiar delicacy of his situation, and looked at the priest, whilst the latter, under a momentary embarrassment, looked significantly at Denis. His Reverence, however, was seldom at a loss.

"What would *you* take him to be worth, Mike?" he asked; "remember he 's but badly trained, and I 'm sure it will cost me both money and trouble to make anything dacent out of him."

"If you got him somewhere between five and twenty and thirty guineas, I would say you have good value for your money, plase your Reverence. What do *you* say, Denis—am I near it?"

"Why, Mike, you know as much about a horse as you do about the Pentateuch or Paralipomenon. Five and twenty guineas, indeed! I hope you won't set your grass as you would sell your horses."

"Why, thin, if your Reverence *ped* ready money for him, I maintain he was as well worth twenty guineas as a thief 's worth the gallows; an' you know, Sir, I 'd be long sorry to differ wid you. Am I near it now, Docthor?"

"Denis got for the horse more than that," said his Reverence, "and he may speak for himself."

"Thrue for you, Sir," replied Denis; "I surely got above twenty guineas for him, an' I 'm well satisfied wid the bargain."

"You hear that now, Mike—you hear what he says."

"There 's no goin' beyant it," returned Mike; "the proof o' the puddin' is in the atin', as we 'll soon know, Mave—eh, Docthor?"

"I never knew Mave to make a bad one," said the priest, "except upon the day Friar Hennessy dined with me here—my curate was sick, and I had to call in the Friar to assist me at confession; however, to do Mave justice, it was not *her* fault, for the Friar drowned the pudding, which was originally a good one, with a deluge of strong whisky.

"'It 's too gross,' said the facetious Friar, in his loud strong voice—'it 's too gross, Docthor Finnerty, so let us *spiritualise* it, that it may be Christian atin', fit for pious men to digest,' and then he came out with his thundering laugh—oigh, oigh, oigh, oigh! but he had consequently the most of the pudding to himself, an' indeed brought the better half of it home in his saddle-bags."

"Faix, an' he did," said Mave, "an' a fat goose that he coaxed Mary to kill for him unknownst to us all, in the coorse o' the day."

"How long is he dead, Docthor?" said Denis; "God rest him any way, he 's happy!"

"He died in the hot summer, now nine years about June last; and talking about him, reminds me of a trick he put on me about two years before his death. He and I had not been on good terms for long enough before that time; but as the curate I had was then sickly, and as I wouldn't be allowed two, I found that it might be convenient to call in the Friar occasionally, a regulation he did not at all relish, for he said he could make far more by *questing* and poaching about among the old women of the parish, with whom he was a great favourite, in consequence of the Latin hymns he used to sing for them, and the great cures he used to perform—a species of devotion which neither I nor my curate had time to practise. So, in order to renew my intimacy, I sent him a bag of oatmeal and a couple of flitches of bacon, both of which he readily accepted, and came down to me on the following day to borrow three guineas. After attempting to evade him—for, in fact, I had not the money *to spare*—he at length succeeded in getting them from me, on the condition that he was to give my curate's horse and mine a month's grass, by way of compensation, for I knew that to expect payment from him was next to going for piety to a parson.

"'I will,' said he, 'give your horses the run of my best field'—for he held a comfortable bit of ground; 'but,' he added, 'as you have been always cutting at me about my principle, I must insist, if it was only to convince you of my ginerosity, that you 'll lave the choosing of the month to myself.'

"As I really wanted an assistant at the time, in consequence of my curate's illness, he had me bound, in some degree, to his own will. I accordingly gave him the money; but from that till the day of his death, he never sent for our horses, except when there was a foot and a half of snow on the ground, at which time he was certain to despatch a messenger for him, 'with Father Hennessy's compliments, and he requested Doctor Finnerty to send the horses to Father Hennessy's field, to ate their month's grass.'"

"But is it true, Docthor, that his face was shinin' after his death?"

"True enough, and to my own knowledge, long *before* that event."

"Dear me," exclaimed Mave, "he was a holy man afther all!"

"Undoubtedly he was," said the priest; "there are spots in the sun, Mrs. O'Shaughnessy—we are not all immaculate. There never was one sent into this world without less or more sin upon them. Even the saints themselves had venial touches about them, but nothing to signify."

"Docthor," said the uncle, pertinaciously adhering to the original question, "you have an opportunity of knowin' what a good parish might be worth to a smart, active priest? For the sake of a son of mine that I've some notion of ——"

"By the by, I wonder Denis is not here before now," exclaimed his Reverence, lending a deaf ear to Mike O'Shaughnessy's interrogatory.

Old Denis's favourite topic had been started, and he accordingly launched out upon it with all the delight and ardour of a fond father.

"Now, Docthor dear, before us all—an' sure you know as well as I do, that we're all friends together—what's your downright opinion of Denis? Is he as bright as you tould me the other mornin' he was?"

"Really, Denis O'Shaughnessy," replied his Reverence, "it's not pleasant to me to be pressed so often to eulogise a young gintleman of whose talents I have so frequently expressed my opinion. Is not once sufficient for *me* to say what I've said concerning him? But, as we *are* all present, I now say and declare, that my opinion of Denis O'Shaughnessy, jun., is decidedly *peculiar*—decidedly.—Come, girshah, keep basting the mutton, and never heed my boots—turn it about and baste the back of it better."

"God be thanked," exclaimed the delighted father, "sure it's a comfort to hear *that*, any how—afther all the pains and throuble we've taken wid him, to know it's not lost. Why, that boy was so smart, Docthor, that, may I never sin, when he went first to the Latin, but—an' this is no lie, for I have it from his own lips—when he'd look upon his task two or three times over night, he'd waken wid every word of it, pat off the book, the next mornin'. And how do you think he got it? Why, the crathur, you see, used to dhrame that he was readin' it off, and so he used to get it that way in his sleep!"

At this moment Darby Moran, Denis's old foe, entered, and his reception was cordial, and, if the truth were known, almost magnanimous on the part of Denis.

"Darby Moran," said he, "not a man, barrin' his Reverence here, in the parish we sit in, that I'm prouder to see on my flure—give me your hand, man alive, and Mave and all of ye welcome him. Everything of what you know is buried between us, and you're bound to welcome him, if it was only in regard of the handsome way he spoke of our son this day—here's my own chair, Darby, and sit down."

"Throth," said Darby, after shaking hands with the priest and greeting the rest of the company, "the same boy no one could spake ill of; and, although we and his people were not upon the best footin', still the sarra one o' me but always gave *him* his due."

"Indeed, I believe you, Darby," said his father; "but are you

comfortable? draw your chair nearer the fire — the evenin's gettin' cowld."

"I 'm very well, Denis, I thank you;—nearer the fire! Faix, except you want to have me roasted along wid that shoulder of mutton and goose, I think I can't go much nearer it."

"I 'm sorry, you warn't in sooner, Darby, till you'd hear what Docthor Finnerty here—God spare him long among us—said of Denis a while ago. Docthor, if it would'nt be makin' too free, maybe you 'd oblage me wid repatin' it over again?"

"I can never have any hesitation," replied the priest, "in repeating anything to his advantage—I stated, Darby, that young Misther O'Shaughnessy was a youth of whom my opinion was decidedly *peculiar*—keep basting, child, you're forgetting the goose now; did you never see a priest's boots before?"

"An' nobody has a better right to know nor yourself, wherever larnin' and education 's consarned," said the father.

"Why, it 's not long since I examined him myself; I say it sitting here, and I believe every one that hears me is present; and during the course of the examination I was really astonished. The translations, and derivations, and conjugations, and ratiocinations, and variations, and investigations that he gave, were all the most remarkably original I ever heard. He would not be contented with the common sense of a passage; but he 'd keep hunting, and hawking, and fishing about for something that was out of the ordinary course of reading, that I was truly struck with his eccentric turn of genius."

"You think he 'll pass the Bishop with great credit, Docthor?"

"I 'll tell you what I think, Denis—which is going further than I went yet—I think that if *he* were the Bishop, and the *Bishop* the candidate for Maynooth, that his lordship would have but a poor chance of passing. There 's the pinnacle of my eulogium upon him; and now, to give my opinion on another important subject; I pronounce both the goose and mutton done to a turn. As it appears that Mrs. O'Shaughnessy has every other portion of the dinner ready, I move that we commence operations as soon as possible."

"But Denis, Docthor? it would be a pleasure to me to have him, poor fellow, wid *all* his throuble over, and his mind at ase; maybe if we wait a weeshy while longer, Docthor, that he 'll come, and you know Father Molony too is to come yet, and some more of our friends."

"If the examination was a long one, I tell you that Misther O'Shaughnessy may not be here this hour to come; and you may be sure, the Bishop, meeting such a bright boy, wouldn't make it a short one. As for Father Molony, he 'll be here time enough, so I move again that we attack the citadel."

"Well, well, never say it again—the sarra one o' me will keep it back, myself bein' as ripe as any of you, barrin' his Reverence, that we 're not to take the foreway of in anything. Ha! ha! ha!"

Whilst Mave and her daughters were engaged in laying dinner, and in making all the other arrangements necessary for their comfort, the priest took Denis aside, and thus addressed him :—

"Denis, I need scarcely remark, that this meeting of our friends is upon no common occasion; that it 's neither a wedding, nor a Station, nor a christening, but a gathering of relations for a more honourable purpose than any of them, excepting the Station, which you know is a *religious rite.* I just mention this privately, lest you might not be properly on your guard, and to prevent any appearance of maneness; or—in short, I hope you have abundance of everything; I hope you have, and that not for your own sake, so much as for that of your son. Remember your boy, and what he 's designed for, and don't let the dinner or its concomitants be discreditable to *him;* for, in fact, it 's his dinner, observe, and not yours."

"I 'm thankful, I 'm deeply thankful, an' for ever oblaged to your Reverence for your kindness; although widout at all makin' little of it, it wasn't wanted here; never fear, Docthor, there 'll be lashings and lavins."

"Well, but make that clear, Denis; here now are near two dozen of us, and you say there are more to come, and all the provision I see for them is a shoulder of mutton, a goose, and something in that large pot on the fire, which I suppose is hung beef."

"Thrue for you, Sir, but you don't know that we 've got a tarin' fire down in the barn, where there 's two geese more and two shouldhers of mutton to help what you seen—not to mintion a great big puddin', an' lots of other things. Sure you might notice Mave and the girls runnin' in an' out to attind the cookin' of it."

"Enough, Denis, that 's sufficient; and now, between you and me, I say your son will be the load-star of Maynooth, which out-tops anything I said of him yet."

"There 's a whole keg of whisky, Docthor."

"I see nothing to prevent him from being a Bishop; indeed, it 's almost certain, for he can't be kept back."

"I only hope your Reverence will be livin' when he praches his first sarmon. I have the dam of the coult still, an' a wink 's as good as a nod, please your Reverence."

"A strong letter in his favour to the President of Maynooth will do him no harm," said the priest.

They then joined their other friends, and in a few minutes an excellent dinner, plain and abundant, was spread out upon the table. It consisted of the usual materials which constitute an Irish feast in the house of a wealthy farmer, whose pride it is to compel every guest to eat so long as he can swallow a morsel. There were geese and fowl of all kinds—shoulders of mutton, laughing-potatoes, carrots, parsnips, and cabbage, together with an immense pudding, boiled in a clean sheet, and ingeniously kept together with long straws* drawn through it in all directions. A lord or duke might be senseless enough to look upon such a substantial yeoman-like meal with a sneer; but with all their wealth and elegance, perhaps they might envy the health and appetite of those who partook

* This, about thirty years ago, was usual at weddings and other feasts, where everything went upon a large scale.

of it. When Father Finnerty had given a short grace, and the operations of the table were commenced, Denis looked round him with a disappointed air, and exclaimed,

"Father Finnerty, there's only one thing, indeed I may say two, a wantin' to complate our happiness—I mean Denis and Father Molony! What on earth does your Reverence think can keep them?"

To this he received not a syllable of reply, nor did he consider it necessary to urge the question any further at present. Father Finnerty's powers of conversation seemed to have abandoned him; for although there were some few expressions loosely dropped, yet the worthy priest maintained an obstinate silence.

At length, in due time, he began to let fall an occasional remark, impeded considerably by hiccups, and an odd *Deo Gratias*, or *Laus Deo*, uttered in that indecisive manner which indicates the position of a man who debates within himself, whether he ought to rest satisfied or not.

At this moment the trampling of a horse was heard approaching the door, and immediately every one of Denis's family ran out to ascertain whether it was the young candidate. Loud and clamorous was their joy on finding that they were not mistaken; he was alone, and, on arriving at the door, dismounted slowly, and received their welcomes and congratulations with a philosophy which perplexed them not a little. The scene of confusion which followed his entrance into the house could scarcely be conceived: every hand was thrust out to welcome him, and every tongue loud in wishing him joy and happiness. The chairs and stools were overturned as they stood in the way of those who wished to approach him; plates fell in the bustle, and wooden trenchers trundled along the ground; the dogs, on mingling with the crowd that surrounded him, were kicked angrily from among them by those who had not yet got shaking hands with Denis. Father Finnerty, during this commotion, kept his seat in the most dignified manner; but the moment it had subsided, he stretched out his hand to Denis, exclaiming,

"Mr. O'Shaughnessy, I congratulate you upon the event of this auspicious day! I wish you joy and happiness!"

"So do we all, over and over agin!" they exclaimed; "a proud gintleman he may be this night!"

"I thank you, Father Finnerty," said Denis, "and I thank you all!"

"Denis avourneen," said his mother, "sit down an' ate a hearty dinner; you must be both tired and hungry, so sit down, avick, and when you're done you can tell us all."

"*Bonum concilium, mi chare Dionysi*—the advice is good, Mrs. O'Shaughnessy, and I myself will, in honour of this day, although I have already dined, just take another slice;" and as he spoke he helped himself. "Anything to honour a friend," he continued; "but, by the by, before I commence, I will try your own prescription, Denis—a whetter of this poteen at intervals. Hoch, that's glorious stuff—pure as any one of the cardinal virtues, and strong as fortitude, which is the champion of them all."

Denis, during these pleasant observations of the priest, sat silent, with

a countenance pale and apparently dejected. When his mother had filled his plate, he gently put it away from him; but poured out a little spirits and water, which he drank.

"I cannot eat a morsel," said he; "mother, don't press me, it 's impossible. We are all assembled here—friends, neighbours, and relations—I 'll not disguise the fact—but the truth is, I have been badly treated this day; I have been, in the most barefaced manner, rejected by the Bishop, and a nephew of Father Molony's elected in my place."

The effect which this disclosure produced upon the company present, especially upon his own family, utterly defies description. His father hastily laid down his glass, and his eyes opened to the utmost stretch of their lids; his mother let a plate fall which she was in the act of handing to one of her daughters, who was about to help a poor beggar at the door; all convivial enjoyment was suspended; the priest laid down his knife and fork, and fixed his large eyes upon Denis, with his mouth full; his young sister, Susan, flew over to his side, and looked intensely into his countenance for an explanation of what he meant, for she had not properly understood him.

"Rejected!" exclaimed the priest—"rejected! Young man, I am your spiritual superior, and I command you, on this occasion, to practise no jocularity whatsoever—I lay it upon you as a religious duty to be serious and candid, to speak truth, and inform us at once whether what you have advanced be true or not?"

"I wish," said Denis, "that it was only jocularity on my part; but I solemnly assure you all that it is not. The Bishop told me that I suffered myself to be misled as to my qualifications for entrance; he says it will take a year and a half 's hard study to enable me to matriculate with a good grace. I told him that your Reverence examined me, and said I was well prepared; and he said to me in reply, that your Reverence was very little of a judge as to my fitness."

"Very well," said the priest, "I thank his lordship; 'tis true, I deserved that from *him;* but it can't be helped. I see, at all events, how the land lies. Denis O'Shaughnessy, I pronounce you to be, in the first place, an extremely stultified and indiscreet young man; and, in the next place, as badly treated, and as oppressed a candidate for Maynooth as ever entered it. I pronounce you, in the face of the world, right well prepared for it; but I see now who is the spy of the diocese—oh, oh, thank you, Misther Molony—I now remimber, that he is related to his lordship through the beggarly clan of the M——'s. But wait a little; if I have failed here, thank Heaven I have interest in the next diocese, the Bishop of which is my cousin, and we will yet have a tug for it."

The mother and sisters of Denis were now drowned in tears; and the grief of his sister Susan was absolutely hysterical. Old Denis's brow became pale and sorrowful, his eye sunk, and his hand trembled. His friends all partook of this serious disappointment, and sat in silence and embarrassment around the table. Young Denis's distress was truly intense: he could not eat a morsel; his voice was tremulous with vexation; and, indeed, altogether the aspect of those present betokened the occurrence of some grievous affliction.

"Well," said Brian, Denis's elder brother, "I only say this, that it 's a good story for him to tell that he *is* a Bishop, otherwise I 'd think no more of puttin' a bullet through him from behind a hedge, than I would of shootin' a cur dog."

"Don't say that, Brian," said his mother; "bad as it is, he 's one of our clargy, so don't spake disrespectful of him; sure a year is not much to wait, an' the next time you go before him it won't be in his power to keep you back. As for Father Molony, we wish him well, but undher the roof of this house, except at a Station, or something else of the kind, he will never sit, barrin' I thought he was either dhry or hungry, that I wouldn't bring evil upon my substance by refusin' him."

"And that was his lordship's character of me?" inquired the priest once more with chagrin.

"If that was not, perhaps you will find it in this letter," replied Denis, handing him a written communication from the Bishop. Father Finnerty hastily broke open the seal, and read silently as follows:—

"*To the Rev. Father Finnerty, peace, and benediction.*

"Rev. Sir,

"I feel deep indignation at hearing the disclosure made to me this day by the bearer, touching your negotiation with him and his family, concerning a horse, as the value paid by them to you for procuring the use of my influence in his favour; and I cannot sufficiently reprobate such a transaction, nor find terms strong enough in which to condemn the parties concerned in it. Sir, I repeat it, that such juggling is more reprehensible on your part than on theirs, and that it is doubly disrespectful to me, to suppose that I could be influenced by any thing but merit in the candidates. I desire you will wait upon me to-morrow, when I hope you may be able to place the transaction in such a light as will raise you once more to the estimation in which I have always held you. There are three other candidates, one of whom is a relation of your excellent curate's; but I have as yet made *no* decision, so that the appointment is still open. In the mean time, I command you to send back the horse to his proper owner, as soon after the receipt of this as possible, for O'Shaughnessy must not be shackled by any such stipulations. I have now to ask your Christian forgivenes for having, under the influence of temporary anger, spoken of you before this lad with disrespect. I hereby make restitution, and beg that you will forgive me, and remember me by name in your prayers, as I shall also name you in mine.

"I am, &c.

"+ James M."

When Father Finnerty read this letter, his countenance gradually assumed an expression of the most irresistible humour; nothing could be more truly comic than the significant look he directed at each individual of the O'Shaughnessys, not omitting even the little boy who had basted the goose, whom he patted on the head with that mechanical abstraction resulting from the occurrence of something highly agreeable. The cast of his features was now the more ludicrous, when contrasted with the rueful visage he presented on hearing the manner in which his character had been delineated by the Bishop. At length he laid himself back in his chair, and putting his hands to his sides, fairly laughed out loudly for near five minutes.

"Oh!" he exclaimed, "Dionysius, Dionysius, but you are the simple and unsophisticated youth! Oh, you *bocaun* of the wide earth, to come home with a long face upon you, telling us that you were rejected, and you *not* rejected."

"Not rejected!—not rejecet!—not rejeckset!—not raxjaxet!" they all exclaimed, attempting to pronounce the word as well as they could.

"For the sake of heaven above us, Docthor, don't keep us in doubt one minute longer," said old Denis.

"Follow me," said the priest, becoming instantly grave, "follow me, Dionysius; follow me Denis More, and Brian, all follow—follow *me*. *I* have news for you! My friends, we 'll be back instantly."

They accordingly passed into another room, where they remained in close conference for about a quarter of an hour, after which they re-entered in the highest spirits.

"Come," said Denis, "Pether, go over, abouchal, to Andy Bradagh's for Larry Cassidy the piper—fly like a swallow, Pether, an' don't come without him. Mave, achora, all 's right. Susy, you darlin', dhry your eyes, avourneen, all 's right. Nabours, friends—fill, fill—I say all 's right still. My son 's not disgraced, nor he won't be disgraced whilst I have a house over my head, or a beast in my stable. Docthor, reverend Docthor, drink; may I never sin, but you must get merry, an' dance a '*cut-along*' wid myself, when the music comes, and you must thrip the 'priest in his boots' wid Susy here afther. Excuse me, nabours—Docthor, you won't blame me, there 's both joy and sorrow in these tears. I have had a good family of childhre, an' a faithful wife; an' Mave, achora, although time has laid his mark upon you, as well as upon myself, and the locks are grey that wor once as black as a raven: yet, Mave, I seen the day, an' there 's many livin' to prove it—ay, Mave, I seen the day when you wor worth lookin' at—the wild rose of Lisbuie she was called, Docthor. Well, Mave, I hope that my eyes may be closed by the hands I loved an' love so well—an' that 's your own, agrah machree, an' Denis's.

"Whisht, Denis asthore," said Mave, wiping her eyes, "I hope I 'll never see that day. Afther seein' Denis here, what we all hope him to be, the next thing I wish is, that I may never live to see my husband taken away from me, acushla; no, I hope God will take me to himself before *that* comes."

There is something touching in the burst of pathetic affection which springs strongly from the heart of a worthy couple, when, seated among their own family, the feelings of the husband and the father, the wife and the mother, overpower them. In this case, the feeling is always deep in proportion to the strength and purity of domestic affection; still it is checked by the melancholy satisfaction, that our place is to be filled by those who are dear to us.

"But now," said the priest, "that the scent lies still warm, let me ask you, Dionysius, how the Bishop came to understand the *compactum?*"

"I really cannot undertake to say," replied Denis; "but if any man has an eye like a *basileus* he has. On finding, Sir, that there was some defect in my responsive powers, he looked keenly at me, closing his piercing eyes a little, and inquired upon what ground I had presented myself as a candidate. I would have sunk the *compactum* altogether, but for the eye. I suspended and hesitated a little, and at length told him that there was an understanding—a—a—kind of—in short, he squeezed the whole secret out o' me gradationally. You know the result!"

"Ah, Dionysius, you are yet an unfledged bird; but it matters little. All will be rectified soon."

"Arrah, Dinis," inquired his mother, "was it only takin' a rise out of us you wor all the time? Throth myself 's not the betther of the fright you put me into."

"No," replied Denis, "the Bishop treated me harshly I thought: he said I was not properly fit. 'You might pass,' said he, 'upon a particular occasion, or under peculiar circumstances; but it will take at least a year and a half's study, to enable you to enter Maynooth *as I would wish you.* You may go home again,' said he; 'at present I have dismissed the subject.'

"After this, on meeting Father Molony, he told me that his cousin had passed, and that he would be soon sent up to Maynooth: so I concluded all hope was over with me; but I didn't then know what the letter to Father Finnerty contained. I now see that I may succeed still."

"You may and *shall*, Denis; but no thanks to Father Molony for that: however, I shall keep my eye upon the same curate, never fear. Well, let that pass, and now for harmony, conviviality, and friendship. Gentlemen, fill your glasses—I mean your respective vessels. Come, Denis More, let that porringer of yours be a brimmer. Ned Hanratty, charge your noggin. Darby, although your mug wants an ear, it can hold *the full* of it. Mrs. O'Shaughnessy, that old family cruiskeen ought to be with your husband: but no matther—*non constat—Eh? Dionysi? Intelligisne?*"

"*Intelligo, domine.*"

"Here then is health, success, and prosperity to Mr. Dionysius O'Shaughnessy, jun.! May he soon be on the Retreat in the vivacious walls of that learned and sprightly seminary, Maynooth!* On the Retreat, I say, getting fat upon half a meal a day for the first week, fasting tightly against the grain, praying sincerely for a set-in at the king's mutton, and repenting thoroughly of his penitence!"

"Well, Docthor, that is a toast. Denis, have you nothing to say to that? Won't you stand up an' thank his Reverence, any how?"

"I am really too much oppressed with relaxation," said Denis, "to return thanks in that florid style which would become my pretensions. I cannot, however, but thank Father Finnerty for his ingenious and learned toast, which does equal honour to his *head* and heart, and I might superadd, to his *intellects* also; for in drinking toasts, my friends, I always elaborate a distinction between strength of head and strength of intellect. I now thank you all for having in so liberal a manner drunk

* This is a passage which I fear few general readers will understand without explanation; the meaning is this:—When a young man first enters Maynooth College he devotes himself for the space of eight days to fasting and prayer, separating himself as much as possible from all society. He must review his whole life, and ascertain if he can, whether he has ever left any sin of importance unconfessed, either knowingly or by an omission that was culpably negligent. After this examination, which must be both severe and strict, he makes what is called a General Confession; that is, he confesses all the sins he ever committed as far back and as accurately as he can recollect them. This being over, he enters upon his allotted duties as a student, and in good sooth feels himself in admirable trim for "a set-in at the King's Mutton."

my health; and in grateful return, I request you will once more fill your utensils, and learnedly drink—long life and a mitre to the Reverend Father Finnerty, of the Society of St. Dominick, Doctor of Divinity and Parochial Priest of this excellent parish!—*Propino tibi salutem, Doctor doctissime, reverendissime, et sanctissime; nec non omnibus amicis hic congregatis!*"

The priest's eye, during this speech, twinkled with humour; he saw clearly that Denis thoroughly understood the raillery of his toast, and that the compliment was well repaid. On this subject he did not wish, however, to proceed further, and his object now was, that the evening should pass off as agreeably as possible.

Next morning Father Finnerty paid Denis a timely visit, having first, as he had been directed, sent home the colt a little after day-break. They then took an early breakfast, and after about half an hour's further deliberation, the priest, old Denis, and his son—the last mounted upon the redoubtable colt—proceeded to the Bishop's residence. His lordship had nearly finished breakfast, which he took in his study; but as he was engaged with his brother, the barrister, who slept at his house the night before, in order to attend a public meeting on that day, he could not be seen for some time after they arrived. At length they were admitted. The Right Reverend Doctor was still seated at the breakfast table, dressed in a morning gown of fine black stuff, such as the brothers of the Franciscan order of monks usually wear, to which order he belonged. He wore black silk stockings, gold knee-buckles to his small-clothes, a rich ruby ring upon his finger, and a small gold cross, set with brilliants, about his neck. This last was not usually visible; but as he had not yet dressed for the day, it hung over his vest. He sat, or rather lolled back in a stuffed easy chair, one leg thrown indolently over the other. Though not an old man, he wore powder, which gave him an air of greater reverence; and as his features were sharp and intelligent, his eye small but keen, and his manner altogether impressive and gentlemanly, if not dignified, it was not surprising that Father Finnerty's two companions felt awed and embarrassed before him. Nor was the priest himself wholly free from that humbling sensation which one naturally feels when in the presence of a superior mind in a superior station of life.

"Good morning to your lordship!" said the priest, "I am exceedingly happy to see you look so well. Counsellor, your most obedient; I hope, Sir, you are in good health!"

To this both gentlemen replied in the usual common-place terms.

"Docthor," continued the priest, "this is a worthy dacent parishioner of mine, Denis O'Shaughnessy; and this is his son who has the honour to be already known to your lordship."

"Sit down, O'Shaughnessy," said the bishop, "take a seat, young man."

"I humbly thank your lordship," replied Denis the elder, taking a chair as he spoke, and laying his hat beside him on the carpet.

The son, who trembled at the moment from head to foot, did not sit as he was asked, but the father, after giving him a pluck, said in a whisper, "Can't you sit when his lordship bids you." He then took a seat, but appeared scarcely to know whether he sat or stood.

"By the by, Doctor, you have improved this place mightily," continued Father Finnerty, "since I had the pleasure of being here last. I thought I saw a green-house peeping over the garden-wall."

"Yes," replied the Bishop, "I am just beginning to make a collection of shrubs and flowers upon a small scale. I believe you are aware that tending and rearing flowers, Mr. Finnerty, is a favourite amusement with me."

"I believe I have a good right to know as much, Dr. M——," replied Mr. Finnerty. "If I don't mistake, I sent you some specimens for your garden that were not contemptible. And if I don't mistake again, I shall be able to send your lordship a shrub that would take the pearl off a man's eye only to look at it. And what's more, it's quite a new comer; not two years in the country."

"Pray how is it called, Mr. Finnerty?"

"Upon my credit, Doctor, with great respect, I will tell you nothing more about it at present. If you wish to see it, or to know its name, or to get a slip of it, you must first come and eat a dinner with me. And, Counsellor, if you, too, could appear on your own behalf, so much the better."

"I fear I cannot, Mr. Finnerty, but I dare say my brother will do himself the pleasure of dining with you."

"It cannot be for at least six weeks, Mr. Finnerty," said the Bishop. "You forget that the confirmations begin in ten days; but I shall have the pleasure of dining with you when I come to confirm in your parish."

"Phoo! Why, Doctor, that's a matter of course. Couldn't your lordship make it convenient to come during the week, and bring the Counsellor here with you? Don't say no, Counsellor; I'll have no demurring."

"Mr. Finnerty," said the Bishop, "it is impossible at present. My brother goes to Dublin to-morrow, and I must go on the following day to attend the consecration of a chapel in the metropolis."

"Then upon my credit, your lordship will get neither the name nor description of my *Fucia*, until you earn it by eating a dinner, and drinking a glass of claret with the Rev. Father Finnerty. Are those hard terms, Counsellor?—Ha! ha! ha! I'm not the man to be put off a thing, I assure you."

"Mr. Finnerty," said the Bishop, smiling at, but not noticing the worthy priest's blunder about the Fucia, "if possible, I shall dine with you soon; but at present it is out of my power to appoint a day."

"Well, well, Doctor, make your own time of it; and now for the purport of our journey. Denis O'Shaughnessy here, my lord, is a warm respectable parishioner of mine—a man indeed for whom I have a great regard. He is reported to have inherited from his worthy father, two horns filled with guineas. His grandmother, as he could well inform your lordship, was born with a *lucky caul* upon her, which caul is still in the family. Isn't it so, Denis?"

"My lord, in dignity, it's thruth," replied Denis, "and from the time it came into the family they always thruv, thanks be to goodness!"

The lawyer sat eyeing the priest and Denis alternately, evidently

puzzled to comprehend what such a remarkable introduction could lead to.

The Bishop seemed not to be surprised, for his features betrayed no change whatsoever.

"Having, therefore, had the necessary means of educating a son for the church, he has accordingly prepared this young man with much anxiety and expense for Maynooth."

"Plase your lordship," said Denis, "Docthor Finnerty is clothin' it betther than I could do. My heart is fixed upon seein' him what we all expect him to be, your lordship."

"Mr. Finnerty," observed the Bishop, "you seem to be intimately acquainted with O'Shaughnessy's circumstances; you appear to take a warm interest in the family, particularly in the success of his son."

"Undoubtedly, my lord; I am particularly anxious for his success."

"You received my letter yesterday?"

"I am here to-day, my lord, in consequence of having received it. But, by the by, there was, under favour, a slight misconception on the part of your——"

"What misconception, Sir?"

"Why, my lord—Counsellor, this is a—a—kind of charge his lordship is bringing against me, under a slight misconception. My lord, the fact is, that I didn't see what ecclesiastical right I had to prevent Denis here from disposing of his own property to——"

"I expect an apology from you, Mr. Finnerty, but neither a defence nor a justification. An attempt at either will not advance the interests of your young friend, believe me."

"Then I have only to say that the wish expressed in your lordship's letter has been complied with. But wait awhile, my lord," continued the priest, good-humouredly, "I shall soon turn the tables on yourself."

"How is that, pray?"

"Why, my lord, "the horse is in your stable, and Denis declares he will not take him out of it."

"I have not the slightest objection to that," replied the Bishop, "upon the express condition that his son shall never enter Maynooth."

"For my part," observed Mr. Finnerty, "I leave the matter now between your lordship and O'Shaughnessy himself. You may act as you please, Doctor, and so may he."

"Mr. Finnerty, if I could suppose for a moment that the suggestion of thus influencing me originated with *you*, I would instantly deprive you of your parish, and make you assistant to your excellent curate, for whom I entertain a sincere regard. I have already expressed my opinion of the transaction alluded to in my letter. You have frequently offended me, Mr. Finnerty, by presuming too far upon my good temper, and by relying probably upon your own jocular disposition. Take care, Sir, that you don't break down in some of your best jokes. I fear that under the guise of humour, you frequently avail yourself of the weakness, or ignorance, or simplicity, of your parishioners. I hope, Mr. Finnerty, that while *you* laugh at the jest, *they* don't pay for it."

The priest here caught the Counsellor's eye, and gave him a dry wink,

not unperceived, however, by the Bishop, who could scarcely repress a smile.

"You should have known me better, Mr. Finnerty, than to suppose that any motive could influence me in deciding upon the claims of candidates for Maynooth, besides their own moral character and literary acquirements. So long as I live, this, and this alone, shall be the rule of my conduct, touching persons in the circumstances of young O'Shaughnessy."

"My gracious lord," said Denis, "don't be angry wid Mr. Finnerty. I 'll bear it all, for it was my fau't. The horse is mine, and say what you will, out of your stable I 'll never bring him. I think, wid great sibmission, a man may do what he pleases wid his own."

"Certainly," said the Bishop! "my consent to permit your son to go to Maynooth is my own. Now this consent I will not give if you press that mode of argument upon me."

"My Reverend Lord, as heaven 's above me, I 'd give all I 'm worth to see the boy in Maynooth. If he doesn't go afther all our hopes, I 'd break my heart." He was so deeply affected that the large tears rolled down his cheeks as he spoke.

"Will your Lordship *buy* the horse?" he added; "I don't want him, and you, maybe, do?"

"I do *not* want him," said the Bishop, "and if I did, I would not, under the present circumstances, purchase him from you."

"Then my boy won't get in, your lordship. And you 'll neither buy the horse, nor take him as a present. My curse upon him for a horse! The first thing I 'll do when I get home will be to put a bullet through him, for he has been an unlucky thief to us. Is my son aquil to the others that came to pass your lordship?" asked Denis.

"There is none of them properly qualified," said the Bishop. "If there be any superiority among them your son has it. He is not without natural talent, Mr. Finnerty; his translations are strong and fluent, but ridiculously pedantic. That, however, is perhaps less his fault than the fault of those who instructed him."

"Are you anxious to dispose of the horse?" said the Counsellor.

"A single day, sir, he 'll never pass in my stable," said Denis; "he has been an unlucky baste to me an' mine, an' to all that had anything to do wid him."

"Pray what age is he?"

"Risin' four, sir; 'deed I believe he 's four all out, an' a purty devil's clip he is, as you 'd wish to see."

"Come," said the Counsellor, rising, "let us have a look at him. Mr. Finnerty, you 're an excellent judge; will you favour me with your opinion?"

The priest and he, accompanied by the two O'Shaughnessys, passed out to the stable yard, where their horses stood. As they went, Father Finnerty whispered to O'Shaughnessy:—

"Now, Denis, is your time. Strike while the iron is hot. Don't take a penny!—don't take a fraction! Get into a passion, and swear you 'll shoot him unless he accepts him as a present. If he does, all 's right; he can twine the Bishop round his finger."

"I see, Sir," said Denis; "I see! Let me alone for managin' him."

The barrister was already engaged in examining the horse's mouth, as is usual, when the priest accosted him with—

"You are transgressing etiquette in this instance, Counsellor. You know the proverb—never look a gift horse in the mouth."

"How, Mr. Finnerty?—a gift horse!"

"His Reverence is right!" exclaimed Denis: "the sorra penny ever will cross my pocket for the same horse. You must take him as he stands, sir, barrin' the bridle an' saddle, that's not my own."

"He will take no money," said the priest.

"Nonsense, my dear sir! Why not take a fair price for him?"

"Divil the penny will cross my pocket for him, the unlucky thief!" replied the shrewd farmer.

"Then in that case the negotiation is ended," replied the barrister. "I certainly will not accept him as a present. Why should I? What claim have I on Mr. O'Shaughnessy?"

"I don't want you to take him," said Denis; "I want nobody to take him: but I know the dogs of the parish 'll be pickin' his bones afore night. You may as well have him, Sir, as not."

"Is the man serious, Mr. Finnerty?"

"I never saw a man in my life having a more serious appearance, I assure you," said the priest.

"By Jove it 's a queer business," replied the other: "a most extraordinary affair as I ever witnessed! Why, it would be madness to destroy such a fine animal as that! The horse is an excellent one! However, I shall certainly *not* accept him, until I ascertain whether I can prevail upon the Bishop to elect his son to this vacancy. If I can make the man no return for him, I shall let him go to the dogs."

"Go up and set to work," said the priest; "but remember that *tace* is Latin for a candle. Keep his lordship in the dark, otherwise this scion is ousted."

"True," said the other. "In the mean time bring them into the parlour, until I try what can be done."

"Take the Bishop upon the father's affection for him," said the priest.

"You are right. I am glad you mentioned it."

"The poor man will break his heart," said the priest.

"He will," responded the Counsellor, smiling.

"So will the mother, too," said the priest, with an arch look.

"And the whole family," replied the Counsellor.

"Go up instantly," said the priest; "you have often got a worse fee."

"And, perhaps, with less prospect of success," said the other. "Gentlemen, have the goodness to walk into the parlour for a few minutes, while I endeavour to soften my brother a little, if I can, upon this untoward business."

When the priest and his two friends entered the parlour, which was elegantly furnished, they stood for a moment to survey it. Old Denis, however, was too much engaged in the subject which lay nearest his heart to take pleasure in anything else; at least until he should hear the priest's opinion upon the posture of affairs.

"What does your reverence think?" said Denis.

"Behave yourself," replied the pastor. "None of your nonsense! You know what I think as well as I do myself."

"But will Dionnisis pass?—Will he go to Maynooth?"

"Will you go to your dinner to-day, or to your bed to-night?"

"God be praised! Well, Docthor, wait till we see him off, then I 'll be spakin' to you!"

"No," said the priest; "but wait till you take a toss upon this sofa, and then you will get a taste of ecclesiastical luxury."

"Ay," said Denis, "but would it be right o' me to sit in it? Maybe it's consecrated."

"Faith, you may swear that; but it is to the ease and comfort of his lordship! Come, man, sit down, till you see how you 'll sink in it."

"Oh, murdher!" exclaimed Denis, "where am I at all? Docthor dear, am I in sight? Do you see the crown o' my head, good or bad? Oh, may I never sin, but that's great state!—Well, to be sure!"

"Ay," said the priest, "see what it is to be a bishop in any church! The moment a man becomes a bishop, he fastens tooth and nail upon luxury, as if a mitre was a dispensation for enjoying the world that they have sworn to renounce. Dionysius, look about you! Isn't this worth studying for?"

"Yes," replied the hitherto silent candidate, "if it was perusal on the part of his lordship that got it."

"Upon my credit, a shrewd observation! Ah, Dionysius, merit is overlooked in every church, and in every profession; or perhaps—hem! —ehem!—perhaps some of your reverend friends might be higher up! I mean nobody; but if sound learning, and wit, and humour, together with several other virtues which I decline enumerating, could secure a mitre, why mitres might be on other brows."

"This is surely great state," observed the candidate; "and if it be a thing that I matriculate"—

"And yet," said the priest, interrupting him, "this same bishop—who is, no doubt, a worthy man, but who has no natural ear for a jest—was once upon a time the priest of an indifferent good parish, like myself; ay, and a poor, cowardly, culprit-looking candidate, ready to sink into the earth before his bishop, like you."

"Me cowardly!" said the candidate: "I decline the insinuation altogether. It was nothing but veneration and respect, which you know we should entertain for all our spiritual superiors."

"That's truth decidedly; though, at the same time, your nerves were certainly rather entangled, like a ravelled hank. But no matter, man; we have all felt the same in our time. Did you observe how I managed the bishop?"

"I can't say I did," replied the candidate, who felt hurt at the imputation of cowardice, before his father; "but I saw, Sir, that the bishop managed you."

"Pray for a longer vision, Dionysius. I tell you that no other priest in the diocese could have got both you and me out of the dilemma in which we stood but myself. He has taken to the study of weeds and

plants in his old days; and I, who have a natural taste for botany, know it is his weak side. I tell you, he would give the right of filling a vacancy in Maynooth any day in the year, for a rare plant or flower. So much for your knowledge of human nature. You'll grant I managed the Counsellor?"

"Between my father and you, Sir, things look well. We have not, however, got a certificate of success yet."

"*Patientia fit levior ferendo!*—Have patience, man. Wait till we see the Counsellor!"

He had scarcely uttered the last words when that gentleman entered.

"Well, Counsellor," said the priest, "is it a hit?"

"Pray what is your Christian name, Mr. O'Shaughnessy?" inquired the lawyer of young Denis.

"My Christian name, Sir," replied Denis, "is Di-o-ny-si-us O'Shaughnessy. That, Sir, is the name by which I am always appellated."

"That's quite sufficient," said the other. "I shall be with you again in a few minutes."

"But won't you give us a hint, my good Sir, as to how the land lies?" said the priest, as the lawyer left the room.

"Presently, Mr. Finnerty, presently."

"*Intelligisne, Dionisi?*"

"*Vix, Domine. Quid sentis?*"

"*Quid sentis!* No, but it was good fortune sent us. Don't you persave, Dionysius, and you, Denis—don't you know, I say, that this letter of admission couldn't be written except the Bishop knew his name in full? Unlucky! Faith if ever a horse was lucky this is he."

"I declare, Docther," said the father, "I can neither sit nor stand, nor think of any one thing for a minute, I'm so much on the fidgets to know what the Bishop 'ill say."

"I also," said Dionysius, "am in a state of evaporation and uncertainty touching the same point. However, this I can affirm with veracity, that if I am rejected, my mind is made up to pursue an antithetical course of life altogether. If he rejects me now, he will never reject me again."

"Musha, how—Denny—Dionnisis, avick? What do you mane?" said the father.

"I will give," said the son, "what is designated a loose translation of my meaning to Mr. Finnerty here, if I find that I am excluded on this occasion."

"And if you *do* succeed," said the priest, "I would advise you to hire a loose translator during the remainder of your residence among us; for upon my veracity, Dionysius, the king's English will perform hard duty until you enter Maynooth. Not a word under six feet will be brought into the ranks—grenadiers every one of them, not to mention the thumpers you will coin."

"Come, Docthor Finnerty," said our candidate, pulling up a little, "if the base Latin which you put into circulation were compared with my English thumpers, it would be found that of the two, I am more legitimate and etymological."

"I shall be happy to dispute that point with you another time," said the priest, "when we can—Silence, here comes the Counsellor."

"Mr. O'Shaughnessy," said the lawyer, addressing the candidate, "allow me to congratulate you on your success! Your business is accomplished. The Bishop is just finishing a letter for you to the President of Maynooth. I assure you, I feel great pleasure at your success."

"Accept my thanks, Sir," said Denis, whose eye was instantly lit up with delight—"accept my most obsequious thanks to the very furthest extent of my gratitude."

The Barrister then shook hands with old Dennis. "O'Shaughnessy," said he, "I am very happy that I have had it in my power to serve you and your son."

"Counsellor," said Denis, seizing his hand in both his—"Counsellor, ahagur machree—Counsellor, oh, what—what—can I say! Is he—is it possible—is it thruth that my boy is to go to Maynewth this time? Oh, if you knew, *but* knew, the heavy, dead weight you tuck off o' my heart! Our son not cast aside—not disgraced!—for what else would the people think it? The horse!—a poor bit of a coult—a poor unsignified animal! To the devil wid him! What is he compared to the joy an' delight of this minute? Take him, Sir; take him—an' if he was worth his weight in goold, I vow to Heaven above me, I 'd not think him too good. Too good!—no, nor half good enough for you. God remimber this to you! an' he will, too. Little you know the happiness you have given us, Counsellor! Little you know it. But no matther! An' you, too, Father Finnerty, helped to bring this about. But sure you were ever an' always our friend! Well, no matther—no matther! God will reward you both."

"My brother wishes to see Mr. Finnerty and your son," said the barrister; "I think they had better go up to him. He is anxious to get a slip of your shrub, Mr. Finnerty."

"Ah, I thought so," said the priest—"I thought as much."

The Bishop, on their re-appearance, presented Denis with the long wished-for letter. He then gave him a suitable exhortation with reference to the serious and responsible duties for which he was about to prepare himself. After concluding his admonition, he addressed Father Finnerty as follows:

"Now Mr. Finnerty, this matter has ended in a manner satisfactory, not only to your young friend, but to yourself. You must promise me that there shall be no more horse-dealing. I do not think jockeying of that description either creditable or just. I am unwilling to use harsher language, but I could not conscientiously let it pass without reproof. In the next place, will you let me have a slip of that flowering shrub you boast of?"

"Doctor," said the priest, "is it possible you ask it of me? Why, I think your lordship ought to know that it's your own, as is every plant and flower in my garden that you fancy. Do you dine at home to-morrow, my lord?"

"I do," said the Bishop.

"Well, then, I shall come up with a slip or two of it, and dine with you. I know the situation in which it grows best; and knowing this, I

will put it down with my own hands. But I protest, my lord, against your allowing me to be traced in the business of the shrub at all, otherwise I shall have the whole county on my back."

"Be under no apprehension of that, Mr. Finnerty. I shall be happy if you dine with me; but bring it with you. How did you come to get it so early after its appearance in this country?"

"I got it from head quarters, Doctor—from one of the best botanists in the three kingdoms; certainly from the best Irish botanist living—my friend, Mr. Mackay, of the College Botanic Gardens. My lord, I wish you good morning; but before I go, accept my thanks for your kindness to my young friend. I assure you he will be a useful man; for he is even now no indifferent casuist."

"And I, my lord," said Denis, "return you my most grateful—hem—my most grateful—and—most supercilious thanks for the favour—the stupendous favour you have conferred upon me."

"God bless you, my dear child," returned the bishop; "but if you be advised by me, speak more intelligibly. Use plain words, and discard all difficult and pedantic expressions. God bless you! Farewell!"

On coming down, they found old Denis in the stable-yard in rather a ridiculous kind of harness. The saddle that had been on the colt was strapped about him with the bridle, for both had been borrowed from a neighbour.

"Dionnisis an' I must both ride the same horse," said he, "an' as we have two saddles, I must carry one of them."

An altercation then ensued as to which should ride foremost. The son, now in high glee, insisted on the father's taking the seat of honour; but the father would not hear of this. The lad was, in his opinion, at least semi-clerical, and to ride behind would be a degradation to so learned a youth. They mounted at length, the son foremost, and the father on the crupper, the saddle strapped about him, with the stirrups dangling by the horse's flanks. Father Finnerty, who accompanied them, could not, however, on turning from the bishop's grounds into the highway, get a word out of them. The truth is, both their hearts were full; both were, therefore, silent, and thought every minute an hour until they reached home.

This was but natural. A man may conceal calamity or distress even from his dearest friends; for who is there who wishes to be thrust back from his acknowledged position in life? Or who, when he is thrust back, will not veil his misfortunes or his errors with the guise of indifference or simulation? In good fortune we act differently. It is a step advanced; an elevation gained; there is nothing to fear, or to be ashamed of, and we are as strongly prompted by vanity to proclaim it to the world, as we are by pride to ascribe its occurrence to our own talents or virtues. There are other and purer motives for this. The affections will not be still; they seek the hearts to which they tend; and having found them, the mutual interchange of *good* takes place. Father Finnerty—whose heart, though a kind one, had, probably, been too long out of practice to remember the influence and working of the domestic affections—could not comprehend the singular conduct of the two O'Shaughnessys.

"What the devil is the matter with you?" he inquired. "Have you lost the use of your speech?"

"Push an, avourneen," said the father to Denis—"push an; lay the spur to him. Isn't *your* spur on the right foot?"

"Most certainly," said Denis, now as pedantic as ever—"most certainly it is. You are not to be informed that our family spur is a right-foot spur."

"Well, then, Pether Gallagher's spur that I have an is a left-foot spur, for it's an my left foot."

"You are a bright pair," said the priest, somewhat nettled at their neglect of him—"you are a bright pair, and deeply learned in spurs, Can't you ride asier?"

"Never heed him," said the father in a whisper; "do you give the mare the *right* spur, an' I'll give her the *left*. Push an! That's it."

They accordingly dashed forward, Denis plying one heel, and the father another, until the priest found himself gradually falling behind. In vain *he* plied *both* spurs; in vain he whipped, and wriggled on the saddle, and pressed forward his hack. Being a priest's horse, the animal had been accustomed for the last twelve years to a certain jog-trot-pace, beyond which it neither would nor could go. On finding all his efforts to overtake them unsuccessful, he at last shouted after them.

"Do you call that gratitude, my worthy friends? To lave me creeping over the ups and downs of this villanous road without company?"

"Lay an, aroon," said the father. "Let us get home. Oh, how your poor mother will die wid joy, an' Susy, an' Nanny, an' Brian, an' Michael, an' Dick, an' Lanty, an' all o' them. Glory be to Heaven! what a meetin' we'll have! An' the nabours, too! Push an, avick machree."

"My curse upon you, Friar Henessy!" exclaimed the priest, in a soliloquy, "it was you who first taught this four-footed snail to go like a thief to the gallows. I wish to Heaven you had palmed him on some one else, for many a dinner I have lost by him in my time. Is that your gratitude, gentlemen? Do I deserve this?"

"What is he sayin'?" said the father.

"He is declaiming about gratitude," replied Denis.

"Lay an' her," said the father. "Poor Mave!"

"Such conduct does you credit," shouted the priest. "It's just the way of the world. You have got what you wanted out of me, an' now you throw me off. However, go on."

"What's that?" said the father again.

"He is desiring us to go on," replied the son.

"Then, in the name o' Goodness, do so, avourneen. Susy will die downright."

"Where am I to dine to-day?" shouted the priest, in a louder voice. "I say, where am I to come in for my dinner, for I'm not expected at home, and my curate dines out?"

"I can't hear him," said the father.

"He says the curate dines out; an' he wants to know if he's to dine with us."

"Throth, an' he won't; not that we begrudge it to him; but for this

day the sarra one we 'll have but our own relations. Push an. An' Brian, too, poor fellow, that was always so proud of you!"

They had now reached the top of an ascent on the road, whilst the priest toiled up after them. In a few minutes they began to descend, and consequently were out of his sight.

No description of mine could give an adequate perception to the reader of what was felt by the family on hearing that the object of Denis's hopes, and their own proud ambition, was at length accomplished. The Bishop's letter was looked at, turned in every direction, and the seal inspected with a kind of wonderful curiosity, such as a superstitious person would manifest on seeing or touching some sacred relic. The period appointed for his departure now depended upon the despatch with which they could equip him for college. But until this event should arrive, his friends lost no opportunity of having him among them. Various were the treats he got in fair and market. Proud were his relations when paying him the respect which he felt right sincere pleasure in receiving. The medium between dignity and humility which he hit off in these scenes, was worthy of being recorded; but, to do him justice, his forte lay in humility. He certainly condescended with a grace, and made them feel the honour done them by his vouchsafing to associate with such poor creatures, as if he were one of themselves. To do *them also* justice, they appeared to feel his condescension; and, as a natural consequence, were ready to lick the very dust under his feet, considering him, as they did, a priest in everything but ordination.

Denis, besides his intercourse with humble relatives, was now asked to dine with the neighbouring clergymen, and frequently made one at their parties. In the beginning, his high opinion and awe of the clerical character, kept him remarkably dull and sheepish. Many an excellent joke was cracked at his expense; and often did he ask himself what Phadrick Murray, his father's family, or his acquaintances in general, would say, if they saw his learning and his logic so villanously degraded. In proportion, however, as convivality developed among his reverend friends many defects, opinions, and failings, which he never suspected them to possess, so did he begin to gather courage and facility of expression. By degrees he proceeded modestly from the mild and timid effort at wit, to the steadier nerve of moderate confidence; another step brought him to the indifference of a man who can bear an unsuccessful attempt at pleasantry, without being discomposed; the third and last stage advanced him to downright assurance, which having reached, he stopped at nothing. From this forward he began to retort upon his clerical companions, who found that the sheepish youth whom they had often made ridiculous, possessed skill, when properly excited, to foil them at their own weapons. He observed many things in their convivial meetings. The holy man, whom his flock looked upon as a being of the highest sanctity, when lit up into fun and frolic, Denis learned to estimate at his just value. He thought, besides, that a person resolved to go to heaven, had as good a chance of being saved by the direct mercy of God, as through the ministration of men, whose only spiritual advantage over himself consisted in the mere fact of being in orders. To be sure, he saw the usual excep-

tions among them that are to be found among every other class; but he drew his conclusions from the general rule. All this, however, failed in removing that fundamental principle of honest superstition in which he had been trained. The clergymen whom he saw were only a few of those who constituted the great body of the church; but when the long and sanctified calendar of saints and miracles opened upon him, there still remained enough to throw a dim and solemn charm of shadowy pomp around the visions of a mind naturally imaginative.

Messengers were once more sent abroad, to inform their friends of his triumph, who, on ascertaining that his journey was fixed for an early day, lost no time in pouring in, each with some gift suited to their circumstances. Some of these were certainly original, the appropriateness having been in every case determined by the wealth or poverty, ignorance or knowledge, of those who offered them. Some poor relation, for instance, brought him a shirt or two of materials so coarse, that to wear it in a college would be out of the question; others offered him a pair of brogues, much too vulgar for the society he was about to enter; others, again, would present him with books—for it is not at all uncommon to find in many illiterate Irish families half-a-dozen old volumes of whose contents they are ignorant, lying in a dusty corner, where they are kept till some young scion shall be sufficiently instructed to peruse them. The names of these were singular enough. One presented him with "The Necessity of Penance;" another with "Laugh and be Fat;" a third with the "Key of Paradise;" a fourth with "Hell Open;" a fifth handed him a copy of the "Irish Rogues and Rapparees;" a sixth gave him "Butler's Lives of Saints;" a seventh "The Necessity of Fasting;" an eighth "The Epicure's *Vade Mecum.*" The list ran on very ludicrously. Among them were the "Garden of Love and Royal Flower of Fidelity;" "An Essay on the Virtue of Celibacy;" and another "On the Increase of Population in Ireland." To these we may add "The Devil upon Two Sticks," and "The Life of St. Anthony."

"Take these, Misther Denis," said the worthy souls; "they're of no use to us at all at all; but they'll sarve you, of coorse, where you're goin', bekase when you want books in the college you can use them."

Honest Phadrick Murray, in lieu of a more valuable present, brought him his wife's largest and best shawl as a pocket handkerchief.

"Katty, sir, sent you this," said Phadrick, "as a pocket handkerchy; an' be gorra, Misther Denis, if you begin at this corner, an' take it out o' the face, it'll last you six months at a time, any how."

Another neighbour came with a *cool* of rendered lard, hoping it might be serviceable.

"Norah, sir," said the honest friend who brought it, "sent you a crock of her own lard. When you're makin' colcanon, sir, or *sthilk*,* in the college, if you slip in a lump of this, it'll save you the price of butther. The grace 'ill be useful to you, whether or not; an' they say there's a scarcity of it in the college."

* *Sthilk* is made by bruising a quantity of boiled potatoes and beans together. The potatoes, however, having first been reduced to a pulpy state, the beans are but partially broken. It is then put into a dish, and a pound of butter or rendered lard thrust into the middle of it.

A third brought him an oak sapling to keep in his hand about the purlieus of the establishment.

"We know," said he, "that you're given to arguin' an' to that thing you call logic, Misther Denis. Now, Sir, if you're ever hard set in an argument or the like o' that, or if any o' the shthudjeents 'ud be throublesome or imperant, why give them a touch o' this—a lick of it, do you see; jist this a way. First come wid a back sthroke upon the left ear, if they want to be properly convinced; an' thin agin' afore they have time to recover, come down wid a visitation upon the kidney. My life for yours, they'll soon let you alone. Nothin' puzzles one in an argument more than it does."

"Ay," said Denis, "that is what they call in the books the *argumentum baculinum*. I accept your present, Roger; but I flatter myself I shall be a match for any of the collegians without having recourse to the *argumentum baculinum*."

A poor old widow, who was distantly related to them, came upwards of four miles with two or three score of eggs, together with a cock and hen; the eggs for his own use, and the latter for breeding in Maynooth.

"Avourneen, Misther O'Shaughnessy," said she, in broken English, "when you ate out all the eggs, maybe you could get a sonsy little corner about the collegian that you're goin' to larn to be a priest in, an' put them both into it;"—pointing at the same time to the cock and hen —"an' whishper," she continued, in a low friendly voice, "if you could get a weeshy wisp o' sthraw, an' slip it undher your own bed, it would make a nest for them, an' they'd lay an egg for your breakfast all days in the year. But, achora, don't let them be widout a nest egg; an' whishper —maybe you'd breed a clackin' out o' them, that you might sell. Sure they'd help to buy duds of cloes for you; or you might make presents of the crathurs to the blessed an' holy collegian himself. Wouldn't it be good to have him an your side?—He'd help to make a gintleman of you, any way. Faix, sure he does it for many, they say. An' whishper—the breed, avourneen, is good; an' I'm not afeard to say that there never was sich a chicken in the whole collegian, as the ould cock himself. He's the darlin' all out, an' can crow so stoutly, that it bates the world. Sure his comb's a beauty to look at, the darlin'; an' only it's to yourself, an' in regard of the blessed place he's goin' to, I wouldn't part wid him to nobody whatsomever, at all, good or bad."

The most original gift of all was a purse, formed of a small bladder, ingeniously covered with silk. It was given to him by his uncle, as a remembrance of him, in the first place; and secondly, for a more special purpose.

"This will sarve you, Sir," said his uncle, "an' I'll tell you how: if you want to smuggle in a sup of good whisky—as of coorse you will, plase goodness—why this houlds exactly a pint, an' is the very thing for it. The sorra one among them will ever think of searchin' your purse, at least for whisky. Put it in your pocket, Misther Dionnisis; an' I'd take it as a great kindness, if you'd write me a scrape or two of the pen, mentionin' what a good parish 'ud be worth: you'll soon be able to tell me, for I've some notion myself of puttin' Barny to the Latin."

Denis was perfectly aware of the honest warmth of heart with which these simple tokens of esteem were presented to him; and young as he was, his knowledge of their habits and prejudices prevented him from disappointing them by a refusal. He consequently accepted everything offered him, appropriated to himself whatever was suitable to his wants, converted the remainder into pocket-money; and, of course, kept his conscience void of *offence* towards them all; a state of Christian virtue which his refusal of any one gift would have rendered difficult.

On the day before his departure, the friends and relations of the family assembled to hold their farewell meeting. The same spirit which marked all their rustic *symposia* presided in this; if we except a feeling of sorrow natural to his family on being separated from one they loved so affectionately. Denis, who was never deficient in warmth of feeling, could not be insensible to the love and pride with which his family had always looked upon him. Ambition, as he approached it, lost much of its fictitious glitter. A sense of sorrow, if not of remorse, for the fastidious and overbearing spirit he had manifested to them, pressed upon his heart. Pride, in fact, was expelled; nature resumed her empire over him; he looked upon the last two months of his life as a man would be apt to do, who had been all that time under the dominion of a feverish dream. We do not say, however, that either ambition or superstition was thoroughly expelled from his mind; for it is hard at all times to root them out of the system of man: but they ceased to govern him altogether. A passion, too, as obstinate as either of them, was determined to dispute their power. The domestic affections softened his heart; but love, which ambition left for dead, was only stunned; it rose again, and finding a favourable position, set its seal to his feelings.

Denis himself, some days before that appointed for his departure, became perfectly conscious that his affections were strongly fixed upon Susan Connor. The nature of their last interview filled him with shame; nay more, it inspired him with pity for the fair artless girl whom he had so unfeelingly insulted. The manner in which he had won her young affections; the many tender interviews that had passed between them; the sacred promises of unchangeable love they had made to each other, all crowded to his imagination with a power which reduced his spiritual ambition and ecclesiastical pride, at least to the possession only of a divided empire. He had, therefore, with his book in his hand as usual, taken many solitary walks for the preceding few days, with the expectation of meeting Susan. He heard that for the last month or six weeks, she had looked ill, been in low spirits, and lost her health. The cause of this change, though a secret to the world, was known to him. He knew, indeed, that an interview between them was indispensable; but had it not been so, we question whether he would have been able to leave home without seeing her.

His evening strolls, however, up until the day before his setting out for college, were fruitless. Susan, who heretofore had been in the habit of walking in the evenings among the green dells around her father's house, was ever since their last meeting almost invisible. In the mean time, as the day before that of his leaving the neighbourhood *had* arrived,

and as an interview with her was, in a religious point of view, essentially necessary, he took his book in the course of the evening, and by a path slightly circuitous, descended the valley that ran between his father's house and hers. With solemn strides he perambulated it in every direction—north, south, east, and west; not a natural bower in the glen was unexplored; not a green quiet nook unsearched; not a shady tree unexamined; but all to no purpose. Yet, although he failed in meeting herself, a thousand objects brought her to his heart. Every dell, natural bower, and shady tree, presented him with a history of their past affections. Here was the spot where, with beating heart and crimson cheek, she had first breathed out in broken music the acknowledgment of her love; there had another stolen meeting, a thousand times the sweeter for being stolen, taken place. Every spot, in fact, was dear to him, and every object associated itself with delightful emotions that kindled new life in a spirit from which their parent affections had not yet passed away.

Denis now sought the only other place where he had any likelihood of meeting her: this was at the well below her father's house. He walked down along the banks of the little stream that ran past it, until he reached a thorn bush that grew within a few yards of the spring. Under this he sat, anxiously hoping that Susan might come to fill her evening pail, as he knew she was wont to do. A thick flowery branch of the hawthorn, for it was the latter end of May, hung down from the trunk, and served as a screen through which he could observe her should she appear, without being visible himself.

It was now the hour of twilight; the evening was warm and balmy; the whitethorn under which he sat, and the profusion of wild-flowers that spangled the bosom of the green glen, breathed their fragrance around him, and steeped the emotions and remembrances which crowded thickly on him in deep and exquisite tenderness. Up in the air he heard the quavering hum of the snipe, as it rose and fell in undulating motion, and the creak of the rail in many directions around him. From an adjoining meadow in the distance, the merry voices of the village children came upon his ear, as they gathered the wild honey which dropped like dew from the soft clouds upon the long grassy stalks, and meadow-sweet, on whose leaves it lay like amber. He remembered when he and Susan, on meeting there for a similar purpose, felt the first mysterious pleasure in being together, and the unaccountable melancholy produced by separation and absence.

At length he heard a footstep; but he could not persuade himself that the slow and lingering tread of the person approaching him was that of Susan, so much did it differ from the buoyant and elastic step with which she used to trip along. On looking through the branches, however, he perceived her coming towards him, carrying the pitcher as usual in her hand. The blood was already careering at full speed through his veins, and the palpitations of his heart were loud enough to be heard by the ear.

Oh, beauty, beauty! *teterrima causa belli*, thou dost play the devil with the hearts of men! Who is there who doth not wish to look upon thee, from the saint to the sinner?—None. For thee worlds have been

lost; nations swept off the earth; thrones overturned; and cities laid in ashes! Adam, David, Marc Antony, Abelard, and Denis O'Shaughnessy, exhibit histories of thy power never to be forgotten, but the greatest of these is Denis O'Shaughnessy.

Susan was about the middle size; her tresses, like those of the daughters of her country, were a fair brown, and abundant. Her features were not such, we admit, as mark regular and scientific perfection, and perhaps much of their power was owing to their not being altogether symmetrical. Her great charm consisted in a spirit of youthful innocence so guileless, that the very light of purity and truth seemed to break in radiance from her countenance. Her form was round, light, and flexible. When she smiled, her face seemed to lose the character of its mortality—so seraphic and full of an indescribable spell were its lineaments; that is, the spell was felt by its thrilling influence upon the beholder, rather than by any extraordinary perception of her external beauty. The general expression of her countenance, however, was that of melancholy. No person could look upon her white forehead and dark flashing eyes, without perceiving that she was full of tenderness and enthusiasm; but let the light of cheerfulness fall upon her face, and you wished never to see it beam with any other spirit. In her met those extremes of character peculiar to her country. Her laughing lips expanded with the playful delicacy of mirth, or breathed forth, with untaught melody and deep pathos, her national songs of sorrow.

A little before she made her appearance, the moon had risen and softened with her dewy light the calm secluded scene around them. Denis, too, had an opportunity of seeing the lovely girl more distinctly. Her dress was simple but becoming. Her hair, except the side ringlets that fell to heighten the beauty of her neck, was bound up with a comb which Denis himself had presented to her. She wore a white dimity bedgown, that sat close to her well-formed person, descended below her knee, and opened before; the sleeves of it did not reach the elbow, but displayed an arm that could not be surpassed for whiteness and beauty. The bedgown was frilled about the shoulder, which it covered, leaving the neck only, and the upper part of her snowy bosom, visible. A dark ribbon, tied about her waist, threw her figure into exquisite outline, and gave her that simple elegance which at once bespeaks the harmony of due proportion.

On reaching the well she filled her vessel, and placed it on a small mound beside her; then sitting down, she mused for some time, and turning her eyes towards Denis's father's, sighed deeply.

"It 's the least," said the humbled girl, "that I may look towards the house that the only one I ever loved, or ever will love, lives in. Little I thought when I loved him that I was standin' between him an' God. Loved him! I wish I could say it was *past*. I wish I could; for I am afeard that till my weak heart breaks it will love him still. God pity me! It would be well for me I had never seen him! But why he should go to Maynooth without givin' me back my promise, I cannot tell."

Denis rose and approached her. Susan, on seeing him, started, and her lover could perceive that she hastily wiped the tears from her eyes. A single glance, however, convinced her that it was he; and such was

the guileless simplicity of her heart, joined to the force of habit, that her face beamed with one of her wonted smiles at his appearance. This soon passed away, and her features again resumed an expression of deep melancholy.

Our hero now forgot his learning; his polysyllables were laid aside, and his pedantry utterly abandoned. His pride, too, was gone, and the petty pomp of artificial character flung aside like an unnecessary garment which only oppresses the wearer.

"Susan," said he, "I am sorry to see you look so pale and unhappy. I deeply regret it; and I could not permit this day to pass, without seeing and speaking to you. If I go to-morrow, Susan, may I now ask in what light will you remember me?"

"I'll remember you without anger, Denis; with sorrow will I remember you, but not, as I said, in anger; though God knows, and you know, the only token you lave me to remember you by is a broken heart."

"Susan," said Denis, "it was an unhappy attachment, as circumstances have turned out; and I wish for both our sakes we had never loved one another. For some time past my heart has been torn different ways, and, to tell you the truth, I acknowledge that within the last three or four months I have been little less than a villain to you."

"You speak harshly of yourself, Denis; I hope, more so than you deserve."

"No, Susy. With my heart fixed upon other hopes, I continued to draw your affections closer and closer to me."

"Well, that was wrong, Denis; but you loved me long before that time, an' it's not so asy a thing to draw away the heart from what we love; that is, to draw it away *for ever*, Denis, even although greater things may rise up before us."

As she pronounced the last words, her voice, which she evidently strove to keep firm, became unsteady.

"That's true, Susan, I know it; but I will never forgive myself for acting a double part to you and to the world. There is not a pang you suffer but ought to fall as a curse upon my head, for leading you into greater confidence, at a time when I was not seriously resolved to fulfil my vows to you."

"Denis," said the unsuspecting girl, "you're imposin' on yourself—you never could do so bad, so treacherous an act as that. No, you never could, Denis; an', above all the world, to a heart that loved and trusted you as mine did. I won't believe it, even from your own lips. You surely loved me, Denis, and in that case you *couldn't* be desateful to me."

"I did love you; but I never loved you half so well as I ought, Susy; and I never was worthy of you. Susy, I tell you—I tell you—my heart is breaking for your sake. It would have been well for both of us we had never seen, or known, or loved each other; for I know by my own heart what you must suffer."

"Denis, don't be cast down on my account; before I ever thought of you, when I was runnin' about the glens here, a lonely little orphan, I was often sorry, without knowin' why. Sometimes I used to wonder at

it, and search my mind to find out what occasioned it: but I never could. I suppose it was because I saw other girls, like myself, havin' their little brothers an' sisters to play with; or because I had no mother's voice to call me night or mornin', or her bosom to lay my head on, if I was sick or tired. I suppose it was this. Many a time, Denis, even then, I knew what sorrow was, and I often thought that, come what would to others, there was sorrow before *me*. I now find I was right; but for all that, Denis, it's betther that we should give up one another in time, than be unhappy by my bein' the means of turnin' you from the ways and duties of God."

The simple and touching picture which she drew of her orphan childhood, together with the tone of resignation and sorrow which ran through all she said, affected Denis deeply.

"Susan," he replied, "I am much changed of late. The prospect before me is a dark one—a mysterious one. It is not many months since my head was dizzy with the gloomy splendour which the pomps and ceremonies of the Church—soon, I trust, to be restored in this country to all her pride and power—presented to my imagination. But I have mingled with those on whom before this—that is, during my boyhood—I looked with awe, as on men who held vested in themselves some mysterious and spiritual power. I have mingled with them, Susan, and I find them neither better nor worse than those who still look upon them as I once did."

"Well, but, Denis, how does that bear upon your views?"

"It does, Susan. I said I have found them neither better nor worse than their fellow-creatures; but I believe they are not so happy. I think I could perceive a gloom, even in their mirth, that told of some particular thought or care that haunted them like a spirit. Some of them, and not a few, in the moments of undisguised feeling, dissuaded me against ever entering the Church."

"I am sure they're happy," said Susan. "Some time ago, accordin' to your own words, you thought the same; but something has turned your heart from the good it was fixed upon. You're in a dangerous time, Denis; and it's not to be wondhered at, if the temptations of the devil should thry you *now*, in hopes to turn you from the service of God. This is a warnin' to me, too, Denis. May Heaven above forbid that *I* should be made the means of temptin' you from the duty that's before you!"

"No, Susan dear, it's not temptation, but the fear of temptation, that prevails with me."

"But, Denis, surely if you think yourself not worthy to entherthat blessed state, you have time enough to avoid it."

"Ay, but, Susy, there is the difficulty. I am now so placed that I can hardly go back. First, the disgrace of refusing to enter the Church would lie upon me as if I had committed a crime. Again, I would break my father's and my mother's heart: and rather than do that, I could almost submit to be miserable for life. And finally, I could not live in the family, nor bear the indignation of my brothers and other relations. You know, Susan, as well as I do, the character attached to those who

put their friends to the expense of educating them for the Church, who raise their hopes and their ambition, and afterwards disappoint them."

"I know it."

"This, Susan, dear, prevails with me. Besides, the Church now is likely to rise from her ruins. I believe that if a priest did his duty, he might possibly possess miraculous power. There is great pomp and splendour in her ceremonies, a sense of high and boundless authority in her pastors; there is rank in her orders sufficient even for ambition. Then the deference, the awe, and the humility with which they are approached by the people—ah! Susan, there is much still in the character of a priest for the human heart to covet. The power of saying mass, of forgiving sin, of relieving the departed spirits of the faithful in another world, and of mingling in our holy sacrifices with the glorious worship of the cherubims, or angels, in heaven—all this is the privilege of a priest, and what earthly rank can be compared to it?"

"None at all, Denis—none at all. Oh, think this way still, and let no earthly temptation—no—don't let—even me—what am *I*?—a poor humble girl—oh! no, let nothing keep you back from this."

The tears burst from her eyes, however, as she spoke.

"But, Denis," she added, "there is one thing that turns my brain. I fear that, even *afther* your ordination, I couldn't look upon you as I would upon another man. Oh, my heart would break if one improper thought of it was fixed upon you *then*."

"Susy, hear me. I could give up all, but you. I could bear to disappoint father, mother, and all; but the thought of giving you up for ever is terrible. I have been latterly in a kind of dream. I have been among friends and relatives until my brain was turned; but now I am restored to myself, and I find I cannot part with you. I would gladly do it; but I cannot. Oh, no, Susan, dear, my love for you was dimmed by other passions; but it was not extinguished. It now burns stronger and purer in my heart than ever. It does—it does. And, Susan, I always loved you."

Susan paused for some time, and unconsciously plucked a wild flower which grew beside her: she surveyed it a moment, and exclaimed:—

"Do you see this flower, Denis? it 's a faded primrose. I'm like that flower in one sense; *I'm* faded; my heart's broke."

"No, my beloved Susan, don't say so; you 're only low-spirited. Why should your heart be broke, and you in the very bloom of youth and beauty?"

"Do you remember our last meetin', Denis? Oh, how could you be so cruel then as to bid me think of marryin' another, as if I had loved you for anything but yourself? I'm but a simple girl, Denis, and know but little of the world; but if I was to live a thousand years, you would always see the sorrow that your words made me feel visible upon my countenance. I'm not angry with you, Denis; but I'm telling you the truth."

"Susan, my darling, this is either weakness of mind or ill health. I will see you as beautiful and happy as ever. For my part, I now tell you, that no power on earth can separate us! Yes, my beloved Susan,

I will see you as happy and happier than I have ever seen you. That will be when you are my own young and guileless wife."

"Ah, no, Denis! My mind is made up: I can never be your wife. Do you think that I would bring the anger of God upon myself, by temptin' you back from the holy office you're entering into? Think of it yourself, Denis. Your feelings are melted now by our discoorse, and, maybe, because I'm near you; but when time passes, you'll be glad that in the moment of weakness you didn't give way to them. I know it's natural for you to love me now. You're lavin' me—you're lavin' the place where I am—the little river and the glen where we so often met, and where we often spent many a happy hour together. That has an effect upon you; for why should I deny it?—you see it—it is hard—very hard—even upon myself."

She neither sobbed nor cried so as to be heard, but the tears gushed down her cheeks in torrents.

"Susan," said Denis, in an unsteady voice, "you speak in vain. Every word you say tells me that I cannot live without you; and I will not."

"Don't say that, Denis. Suppose we should be married, think of what I would suffer if I saw you in poverty or distress, brought on because you married *me!* Why, my heart would sink entirely under it. Then your friends would never give me a warm heart. *Me!* they would never give *yourself* a warm heart; and I would rather be dead than see you brought to shame, or ill-treatment, or poverty, on my account. Pray to God, Denis, to grant you grace to overcome whatever you feel for me. *I* have prayed both for you and myself. Oh, pray to him, Denis, sincerely, that he may enable you to forget that such a girl—such an unhappy girl—as Susan Connor ever lived!"

Poor Denis was so much overcome that he could not restrain his tears. He gazed upon the melancholy countenance of the fair girl, in a delirium of love and admiration; but in a few minutes he replied:—

"Susan, your words are lost: I am determined. Oh! great heavens! what a treasure was I near losing! Susan, hear me: I will bear all that this world can inflict; I will bear shame, ill-treatment, anger, scorn, and every harsh word that may be uttered against me; I will renounce church, spiritual power, rank, honour; I will give up father and family—all—all that this world could flatter me with: yes, I will renounce each and all for your sake! Do not dissuade me; my mind is fixed, and no power on earth can change it."

"Yes, Denis," she replied calmly, "there is a power, and a weak power, too, that will change it; for *I* will change it. Don't think, Denis, that in arguin' with you, against the feelin's of my own heart, I am doin' it without sufferin'. Oh, no, indeed! You know, Denis, I am a lonely girl; that I have neither brother, nor sister, nor mother to direct me. Sufferin'!—Oh, I wish you knew it! Denis, you must forget me. I'm hopeless now: my heart, as I said, is broke, and I'm strivin' to fix it upon a happier world! Oh! if I had a mother or a sister, that I could, when my breast is likely to burst, throw myself in their arms, and cry and confess all I feel! But I'm alone, and must bear all my own sorrows. Oh, Denis! I'm not without knowin' how hard the task is that I have set

to myself. Is it nothing to give up all that the heart is fixed upon? Is it nothing to walk about this glen, and the green fields, to have one's eyes upon them, and to remember what happiness one has had in them, knowin', at the same time, that it's all blasted? Oh, is it nothing to look upon the green earth itself, and all its beauty—to hear the happy songs and the joyful voices of all that are about us—the birds singing sweetly, the music of the river flowin'—to see the sun shinin', and to hear the rustlin' of the trees in the warm winds of summer—to see and hear all this, and to feel that a young heart is brakin', or already broken within us—that we are goin' to lave it all—all we loved—and to go down into the clay under us? Oh, Denis, this is hard;—bitter is it to me, I confess it; for something tells me it will be my fate soon!

"But, Susan"——

"Hear me out. I have now repated what I know I must suffer—what I know I must lose. This is my lot, and I must bear it. Now, Denis, will you grant your own Susan one request?"

"If it was that my life should save yours, I would grant it."

"It's the last and only one I will ever ask of you. My health has been ill, Denis; my strength is gone, and I feel I am gettin' worse every day: now when you hear that I am—that I am—*gone*,—will you offer up the first mass you say for my pace and rest in another world? I say the *first*, for you know there's more virtue in a first mass than in any other. Your Susan will be then in the dust, and you may feel sorrow, but not love for her."

"Never, Susan! For God's sake, forbear! You will drive me distracted. As I hope to meet judgment, I think I never loved you till now; and by the same oath, I will not change my purpose in making you mine."

"Then you *do* love me still, Denis? And you would give up *all* for your Susan? Answer me truly, for the ear of God is open to our words and thoughts."

"Then, before God, I love you too strongly for words to express; and I would and will give up all for your sake!"

Susan turned her eyes upon vacancy; and Denis observed that a sudden and wild light broke from them, which alarmed him exceedingly. She put her open hand upon her forehead, as if she felt pain, and remained glancing fearfully around her for a few minutes; her countenance, which became instantly like a sheet of paper, lost all its intelligence, except, perhaps, what might be gleaned from a smile of the most ghastly and desolating misery.

"Gracious heaven! Susan, dear, what's the matter? Oh, my God! your face is like marble! Dearest Susan, speak to me!—Oh, speak to me, or I will go distracted!"

She looked upon him long and steadily; but he perceived with delight that her consciousness was gradually returning. At length she drew a deep sigh, and requested him to listen.

"Denis," said she, "you must now be a man. We can never be married. I AM PROMISED TO ANOTHER!"

"Promised to another! Your brain is turned, Susy. Collect yourself, dearest, and think of what you say."

"I know what I say—I know it too well! What did I say? Why—why," she added, with an unsettled look, "that I 'm promised to another! It is true—true as God's in heaven. Oh, Denis! why did you lave me so long without seein' me? I said my heart was broke, and you will soon know that it has bitter, bitter rason to be so. See here."

She had, during her reply, taken from her bosom a small piece of brown cloth, of a square shape, marked with the letters I. M. I. the initials of the names of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph. She kissed it fervently as she spoke, and desired Denis to look upon it and hear her.

"When you saw me last," she continued, "I left you in anger, because I thought you no longer loved me. Many a scaldin' tear I shed that nobody witnessed; many a wringin' my heart felt since that time. I got low, and, as I said, my health left me. I began to think of what I ought to do; and bein' so much alone, my thoughts were never off it. At last I remembered the Virgin Mother of God, as bein' once a woman, and the likelier to pity one of her own kind in sorrow. I then thought of a scapular; and made a promise to myself, that if you didn't come within a certain time, I would dedicate myself to her for ever. I saw that you neglected me, and I heard so much of the way you spent your time, how you were pleasant and merry while my heart was breakin', that I made a vow to remain a spotless virgin all my life. I got a scapular, too, that I might be strengthened to keep my holy promise; for you didn't come to me within the time. This is it in my hand. It is now on me. THE VOW IS MADE, AND I AM MISERABLE FOR EVER!"

Denis sobbed and wrung his hands, whilst tears, intensely bitter, fell from his eyes.

"Oh, Susan!" he exclaimed, "what have you done? Miserable! Oh, you have ruined *me* utterly! You have rendered *us both* for ever miserable!"

"Miserable!" she exclaimed, with flashing eyes. "Who talks of misery?" But again she put her hand to her forehead, and endeavoured to recollect herself. "Denis," she added, "Denis, my brain *is* turning! Oh, I have no friend! Oh, mother, that I never seen, but as if it was in a dream; mother, *daughter of your daughter's heart*, look down from heaven, and pity your orphan child in her sore trouble and affliction! Oh, how often did I miss you, mother darlin', durin' all my life! In sickness I had not your tendher hands about me; in sorrow I could not hear your voice; and in joy and happiness you were never with me to share them! I had not your advice, my blessed mother, to guide and direct me, to tache me what was right, and what was wrong! Oh, if you will not hear your own poor lonely orphan, who will you hear? if you will not assist her, who ought you to assist? for, as sure as I stand here this night, you are a blessed saint in heaven. But let me not forget the Virgin Queen of Heaven, that I am bound to. *I kneel to you*, Hope of the Afflicted! To you let them go that have a broken heart, as I have! Queen of Glory, pity me!—Star of the Sea—Comfort of the Hopeless—Refuge of Sinners, hear me, strengthen, and support me! And you will too. Who did you ever cast away, mild and beautiful Virgin of Heaven? 'As the lily among thorns, so are you among the

daughters of Adam!'* Yes, Denis, she will support me—she *will* support me! I feel her power on me now! I see the angels of heaven about her, and her mild countenance smilin' sweetly upon the broken flower! Yes, Denis, her glory is upon me!"

The last words were uttered with her eyes flashing wildly as before, and her whole person and countenance evidently under the influence of a highly excited enthusiasm, or perhaps a touch of momentary insanity.

Poor Denis stood with streaming eyes, incapable of checking or interrupting her. He had always known that her education and understanding were above the common; but he never anticipated from her such capacity for deep feeling, united to so much vivacity of imagination as she then displayed. Perhaps he had not philosophy enough, at that period of his youth, to understand the effects of a solitary life upon a creature full of imagination and sensibility. The scenery about her father's house was wild, and the glens singularly beautiful; Susan lived among them alone, so that she became in a manner enamoured of solitude; which, probably more than anything else, gives tenderness to feeling, and force to the imaginative faculties. Soon after she had pronounced the last words, however, her good sense came to her aid.

"Denis," said she, "you have seen my weakness; but you must now see my strength. You know we have a trial to go through before we part for ever."

"Oh! Susy, don't say 'for ever.' You know that the vow you made was a rash vow. It may be set aside."

"It was *not* a rash vow, Denis. I made it with a firm intention of keepin' it, and keep it I will. The Mother of God is not to be mocked, because I am weak, or choose to prefer my own will to hers."

"But, Susy, the Church can dissolve it. You know she has power to bind and to loose. Oh, for God's sake, Susy, if you ever loved me, don't attempt to take back your promise."

"I love you too well to destroy you, Denis. I will never stand between you and God, for that would be my crime. I will never bring disgrace, or shame, or poverty, upon you; for surely these things would fall upon you as a punishment for desartin' him. If you were another—if you weren't intended to be the servant of God, I could beg with you—starve with you—die with you. But when I am gone, remember that I gave up all my hopes, that you might succeed in yours. I'm sure *that* is love. Now, Denis, we must return our promises, the time is passin', and we'll both be missed from home."

"Susan, for the sake of my happiness both in this world and in the next, don't take away all hope. Make me not miserable and wretched; send me not into the church a hypocrite. If you do, I will charge you with my guilt; I will charge you with the crimes of a man who will care but little what he does."

"You will have friends, Denis; pious men, who will direct you, and guide you, and wean your heart from me and the world. You will soon

* The form of the Service to the Virgin, from which most of the above expressions are taken, is certainly replete with beauty and poetry.

bless me for this. Denis," she added, with a smile of unutterable misery, "my mind *is* made up. I belong now to the Virgin Mother of God. I never will be so wicked as to forsake her for a mortal. If I was to marry you with a broken vow upon me, I could not prosper. The curse of God and of his Blessed Mother would follow us both."

Denis felt perfectly aware of the view entertained by Susan, respecting such a vow as she had taken. To reason with her, was only to attack a prejudice which scorned reason. Besides this, he was not himself altogether free from the impression of its being a vow too solemn to be broken without the sanction of the Church.

"Let us go," said Susan, "to the same spot where we first promised. It was under this tree, in this month, last year. Let us give it back there."

The hand-promise in Ireland between the marriageable young of both sexes, is considered the most solemn and binding of all obligations. Few would rely upon the word or oath of any man who had been known to break a hand-promise. And, perhaps, few of the country girls would marry or countenance the addresses of a young person known to have violated such a pledge. The vow is a solemn one, and, of course, given by mutual consent; by mutual consent, also, must it be withdrawn, otherwise it is considered still binding. Whenever death removes one of the parties, without the other having had an opportunity of "giving it back," the surviving party comes, and in the presence of witnesses, first grasping the hand of the deceased, repeats the form of words usual in withdrawing it. Some of these scenes are very touching and impressive, particularly one which the author had an opportunity of witnessing. It is supposed that in cases of death, if the promise be not thus dissolved, the spirit of the departed returns and haunts the survivor until it be cancelled.

When Denis and Susan had reached the hawthorn, they both knelt down. So exhausted, however, had Susan been by the agitation of her feelings, that Denis was under the necessity of assisting her to the place. He could perceive, too, that, amid the workings of her religious enthusiasm, she trembled like an aspen leaf.

"Now," said she, "you are stronger than I am, begin and repeat the words; I will repeat them with you."

"No," replied Denis, "I will never begin. I will never be the first to seal both your misery and mine."

"I am scarcely able," said she; "dear Denis, don't ask me to do what I have not strength for. But it 's useless" she added; "you will never begin unless *I* do."

They then blessed themselves after the form of their church, and as they extended their right hands to each other, the tears fell fast from the eyes of both. The words they repeated were the same, with the difference of the name only.

"I, Susan Connor, in the presence of God, do release you, Denis O'Shaughnessy, from your promise of marriage to me, and from all promises of marriage that you ever made me. I now give you back that promise of marriage, and all promises of marriage you ever made me. To which I call God to witness."

Denis repeated the same words, substituting the name of Susan Connor.

The sobs of Susan were loud and incessant, even before she had concluded the words; their eyes were fixed upon each other with a hopeless and agonising expression: but no sooner were they uttered, than a strong hysteric sense of suffocation rose to her throat; she panted rapidly for breath; Denis opened his arms, and she fell, or rather threw herself, over in a swoon upon his bosom. To press his lips to hers and carry her to the brink of the well, was but the work of a moment. There he laid her, and after having sprinkled her face with water, proceeded to slap the palms of her hands, exclaiming,—

"Susan, my beloved, will you not hear me? Oh, look upon me, my heart's dearest treasure, and tell me that you're living. Gracious God! her heart is broken—she is dead! This—this—is the severest blow of all! I have killed her!"

She opened her eyes as he spoke, and Denis, in stooping to assist her, weeping at the same time like a child, received—a bang from a cudgel that made his head ring.

"Your sowl to the divil, you larned vagabone," said her father, for it was he, "is this the way you're preparin' yourself for the church? Comin' over that innocent colleen of a daughter o' mine before you set out," he added, taking Denis a second thwack across the shoulders—"before you set out for Maynewth!!"

"Why, you miserable vulgarian," said Denis, "I scorn you from the head to the heel. Desist, I say," for the father was about to lay in another swinger upon his kidney—"desist, I say, and don't approximate, or I will entangle the ribs of you!"

"My sowl to glory," said the father, "if ever I had a greater mind to ate my dinner, than I have to anoint you wid this cudgel, you black-coated skamer!"

"Get out, you barbarian," replied Denis, "how dare you talk about unction in connexion with a cudgel? Desist, I say, for I will retaliate, if you approximate an inch. Desist, or I will baptise you in the well, as Philip did the Ethiopian, without a sponsor. No man but a miserable barbarian would have had the vulgarity to interrupt us in the manner you did. Look at your daughter's situation!"

"The hussy," replied the father, "it's the supper she ought to have ready, instead of coortin' wid sich a larned vag——Heavens above me! What ails my child? Susy! Susy, alanna dhas! what's over you? Oh, I see how it is," he continued—"I see how it is! This accounts for her low spirits an' bad health for some time past! Susy, rouse yourself, avourneen! Sure I'm not angry wid you! My sowl to glory, Denny Shaughnessy, but you have broke my child's heart, I doubt!"

"Owen," said Denis, "your indecorous interruption has stamped you with the signature of genuine ignorance and vulgarity; still, I say, we must have some conversation on that subject immediately. Yes, I love your daughter a thousand times better than my own life."

"Faith, I'll take care that we'll have discoorse about it," replied the father. "If you have been a villain to the innocent girl—if you have, Denny, why you'll meet your God sooner than you think. Mark my

words. I have but one life, and I'll lose it for her sake, if she has come to ill."

"Here," said Denis, "let me sprinkle her face with this cool water, that we may recover her, if possible. Your anger and your outrage, Owen, overcame the timid creature. Speak kindly to her, she is recovering. Thank God, she is recovering."

"Susy, avourneen," said the father, "rouse yourself, ma colleen; rouse yourself, an' don't thrimble, that way. The sorra one o' me's angry wid you, at all at all."

"Oh, bring me home," said the poor girl. "Father dear, have no bad opinion of me. I done nothing, an' I hope I never will do any thing, that would bring the blush of shame to your face."

"That's as true as that God's in heaven," observed Denis. "The angels in his presence are not purer than she is."

"I take her own word for it," said the father; "a lie, to the best of my knowledge, never came from her lips."

"Let us assist her home," said Denis. "I told you that we must have some serious conversation about her. I'll take one arm, and do you take the other."

"Do so," said the father, "an', Denny, as you're the youngest and the strongest, jist take up that pitcher o' wather in your hand, an' carry it to the house above."

Denis, who was dressed in his best black from top to toe, made a wry face or two at this proposal. He was able, however, for Susan's sake, to compromise his dignity; so looking about him, to be certain that there was no other person observing them, he seized the pitcher in one hand, gave Susan his arm, and in this unheroic manner assisted to conduct her home.

In about half an hour or better after this, Denis and Owen Connor proceeded in close and earnest conversation towards old Shaughnessy's. On entering, Denis requested to speak with his father and brothers in private.

"Father," said he, "this night is pregnant—that is, *vulgariter*, in the family way—with my fate."

"Throth it is, avick. Glory be to Goodness!"

"Here is Owen Connor, an honest, dacent neighbour——"

"Throth, he is an honest, dacent man," said the father, interrupting him.

"Yes," replied the son, "I agree with you. Well, he has a certain disclosure or proposal to make, which you will be pleased to take into your most serious consideration. I, for my part, cannot help being endowed with my own gifts, and if I happen to possess a magnet to attract feminine sensibility, it is to heaven I owe it, and not to myself."

"It is," said the father, "glory be to his name!"

"Don't be alarmed, or surprised, or angry, at anything Owen Connor may say to you. I speak *significantly*. There are perplexities in all human events, and the cardinal hinge of fate is for ever turning. Now I must withdraw; but in the mean time, I will be found taking a serenade behind the garden, if I am wanted."

"Brian," said the father, "get the bottle; we can't on this night, any way, talk to Owen Connor, or to anybody else, wid dhry lips."

The bottle was accordingly got, and Owen, with no very agreeable anticipations, found himself compelled to introduce a very hazardous topic.

Denis, as he said, continued to walk to and fro behind the garden. He thought over the incidents of the evening, but had no hope that Owen Connor's proposal would be accepted. He knew his father and family too well for that. With respect to Susan's vow, he felt certain that any change of opinion on her part was equally improbable. It was clear, then, that he had no pretext for avoiding Maynooth; and as the shame, affliction, and indignation of the family would, he knew, be terrible, he resolved to conform himself to his circumstances, trusting to absence for that diminution of affection which it often produces. Having settled these points in his mind, he began to grope that part of his head which had come in contact with Owen Connor's cudgel. He had strong surmises that a bump existed, and on examining, he found that a powerful organ of self-esteem had been created.

At this moment he saw Owen Connor running past him at full speed, pursued by his father and brothers, the father brandishing a cudgel in his hand. The son, who understood all, intercepted the pursuers, commanding them in a loud voice to stop. With his brothers he succeeded; but the father's wrath was not to be appeased so easily. Nothing now remained but to stand in his way, and arrest him by friendly violence; Denis, therefore, seized him, and, by assuming all his authority, at length prevailed upon him to give over the chase.

"Only think of him," exclaimed the father, breathless—"onlythink of him havin' the assurance to propose a match between *you* an' his baby-faced daughter! Ho! *Dher manim*, Owen Connor," he shouted, shaking the staff at Owen as he spoke—"*Dher manim!* if I was near you, I'd put your bones through other, for darin' to mintion sich a thing!"

Owen Connor, on finding that he was no longer pursued, stood to reconnoitre the enemy:—

"Denis Oge," he shouted back, "be off to Maynooth as fast as possible, except you wish to have my poor child left fatherless entirely. Go way, an' my blessin' be along wid you; but let there be never another word about *that* business while you live."

"Father," said Denis, "I'm scandalised at your conduct on this dignified occasion. I am also angry with Brian and the rest of you. Did you not observe that the decent man was advanced in liquor? I would have told you so at once, were it not that he was present while I spoke. Did I not give you as strong a hint as possible? Did I not tell you that 'I spoke *significantly?*' Now hear me. Take the first opportunity of being reconciled to Owen Connor. Be civil to him; for I assure you he esteems *me* very highly. Be also kind to his daughter, who is an excellent girl; but I repeat it, her father *esteems me* highly."

"Does he think highly of *you*, Denis?"

"I have said so," he replied.

"Then, throth, we're sorry for what has happened, poor man. But

the never a one o' me, Denis, saw the laste sign of liquor about him. Throth, we will make it up wid him, thin. An' we'll be kind to his daughter, too, Denis."

"Then as a proof that you will follow my advice, I lay it on you as a duty, to let me know how they are, whenever you write to me."

"Throth, we will, Denis;—indeed will we. Come in now, dear; this is the last night you're to be wid us, an' they're all missin' you in the house."

On that night no person slept in Denis O'Shaughnessy's, except our hero, and his mother and sisters. As morning approached, a heaviness of spirits prevailed among the family, which of course was not felt by any except his immediate relations. The more distant friends, who remained with them for the night, sang and plied the bottle with a steadiness which prevented them from feeling the want of rest. About six o'clock, breakfast was ready, Denis dressed, and every arrangement made for his immediate departure. His parents—his brothers, and his sisters, were all in tears, and he himself could master his emotions with great difficulty. At length the hour to which the family of our candidate had long looked forward, arrived, and Denis rose to depart for Maynooth. Except by the sobs and weeping, the silence was unbroken when he stood up to bid them farewell.

The first he embraced was his eldest brother, Brian: "Brian," said he, but he could not proceed—his voice failed him; he then extended his hand, but Brian clasped him in his arms—kissed his beloved brother, and wept with strong grief; even then there was not a dry eye in the house. The parting with his other brothers was equally tender—they wept loudly and bitterly, and Denis joined in their grief. Then came his sisters, who, one by one, hung upon him, and sobbed as if he had been dead. The grief of his youngest sister, Susan, was excessive. She threw her arms about his neck, and said she would not let him go; Denis pressed her to his heart, and the grief which he felt, seemed to penetrate his very soul.

"Susan," said he, "Susan, may the blessing of God rest upon you till I see you again!"—and the affectionate girl was literally torn from his arms.

But now came the most affecting part of the ceremony. His parents had stood apart—their hands locked in each other, both in tears, whilst he took leave of the rest. He now approached his mother, and reverently kneeling down, implored in words scarcely intelligible, her blessing and forgiveness; he extended both his hands—"Mother," he added, "I ask—humbly and penitently, I ask your blessing; it will be sweet to me from your beloved lips, dear mother;—pardon me if I ever—as I feel I often did—caused you a pang of sorrow by my disobedience and folly. Oh, pardon me—pardon me for all NOW! Bless your son, kindest of mothers, with your best and tenderest blessing!"

She threw herself in his arms, and locking him in her embrace, imprinted every part of his face with kisses. "Oh, Denis," she exclaimed, "there is but one more who will miss you more nor I will—Oh, my darlin' son—our pride—our pride—our heart's pride—our honour, and

our credit! Sure, *anim machree,* I have nothin' to forgive you for, my heart's life; but may the blessin' of God and of a happy mother light on you! And, Denis asthore, wasn't it you that made me happy, and that made us all happy! May my blessin' and the blessin' of God rest upon you—keep you from every evil, and in every good, till my eyes will be made glad by lookin' on you agin!"

A grief more deep, and a happiness more full, than had yet been felt, were now to come forth. Denis turned to his father—his companion in many a pastime, and in many a walk about their native fields. In fair—in market—at mass—and at every rustic amusement within their reach—had he been ever at the side of that indulgent father, whose heart and soul were placed in him.

Denis could not utter a word, but kept his streaming eyes fixed upon the old man, with that yearning expression of the heart, which is felt when it desires to be mingled with the very existence of the object that it loves. Old Denis advanced, under powerful struggles to suppress his grief: he knelt, and as the tears ran in silence down his cheeks, thus addressed himself to God:—

"I kneel down before you, oh, my God! a poor sinner! I kneel here in your blessed presence, with a heart—with a happy heart—this day, to return you thanks in the name of myself and the beloved partner you have given me through the cares and thrials of this world, to give you our heart's best thanks for graciously permittin' us *to see this day!* It is to you we owe it, good Father of Heaven! It is to you we owe this—an' him—my heart's own son, that kneels before me to be blessed by my lips! Yes—yes, he is—he *is* the pride of our lives!—He is the mornin' star among us! he was ever a good son; and you know that from the day he was born to this minute, he never gave me a sore heart! Take him under your own protection! Oh, bless him as we wish, if it be your holy will to do so!—Bless him and guard him, for my heart's in him: it is—he knows it—everybody knows it;—and if anything was to happen him——"

He could proceed no further: the idea of losing his son, even in imagination, overpowered him;—he rose, locked him to his breast, and for many minutes the grief of both was loud and vehement.

Denis's uncle now interposed: "The horses," said he, "are at the door, an' time's passin'."

"Och, thrue for you, Barny," said old Denis: "come, acushla, an' let me help you on your horse. We will go on quickly, as we're to meet Father Finnerty at the crass-roads."

Denis then shook hands with them all, not forgetting honest Phadrick Murray, who exclaimed, as he bid him farewell, "Arrah! Misther Denis, aroon, won't you be thinkin' of me now an' thin in the College! Faix, if you always argue as bravely wid the Collegians as you did the day you proved me to be an ass, you'll soon be at the head of them!"

"Denis," said the uncle, "your father excuses me in regard of havin' to attend my cattle in the fair to-day. You won't be angry wid me, dear, for lavin' you now, as my road lies this other way. May the

blessin' of God and his holy mother keep you till I see you agin! an', Denis, if you'd send me a scrape or two, lettin' me know what a good parish 'ud be worth; for I intend next spring to go wid little Barny to the Latin!"

This Denis promised to do; and after bidding him farewell, he and his friends—some on horseback and numbers on foot—set out on their journey; and as they proceeded through their own neighbourhood, many a crowd was collected to get a sight of *Denis O'Shaughnessy going to Maynooth.*

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It was one day in autumn, after a lapse of about two years, that the following conversation took place between a wealthy grazier from the neighbouring parish, and one of our hero's most intimate acquaintances. It is valuable only as it throws light upon Denis's ultimate situation in life, which, after all, was not what our readers might be inclined to expect.

"Why, then, honest man," said Denis's friend, "that's a murdherin' fine dhrove o' bullocks you're bringin' to the fair?"

"Ay!" replied the grazier, "you may say that. I'm thinkin' it wouldn't be asay to aquil them."

"Faix, sure enough. Where wor they fed, wid simmission?"

"Up in Teernahusshogue. Arrah, will you tell me what weddin' was that that passed awhile agone?"

"A son of ould Denis O'Shaughnessy's, God be marciful to his sowl!"

"Denis O'Shaughnessy! Is it him they called the 'Pigeon-house?' An' is it possible he 's dead?"

"He 's dead, nabour, an', in throth, an honest man 's dead!"

"As ever broke the world 's bread. The Lord make his bed in heaven this day! Hasn't he a son larnin' to be a priest in Maynewth?"

"Ah! *Fahreer gairh!* That 's all over."

"Why, is *he* dead, too?"

"Be Gorra, no—but the conthrairy to that. 'Twas *his* weddin' you seen passin' a minute agone."

"Is it the young sogarth's? Musha, bad end to you, man alive, an' spake out. Tell us how that happened? Sowl it 's a quare business, an' him was in Maynewth!"

"Faith, he was so; an' they say there wasn't a man in Maynewth able to tache him. But, passin' that over—you see, the father, ould Denis—an' be Gorra, he was very bright too, till the son *grewn* up, an' drownded him wid the languidges—the father you see, ould Denis himself, tuck a faver whin the son was near a year in the college, an' it proved too many for him. He died; an' whin young Dinny hard of it, the divil a one of him would stay any longer in Maynewth. He came home like a scarecrow, said he lost his health in it, an' refused to go back. Faith, it was a lucky thing that his father died beforehand, for it would brake his heart. As it was, they had terrible work about it. But ould

Denis is never dead while young Denis is livin'. Faix, he was as stiff as they wor stout, an' wouldn't give in; so, afther ever so much wranglin', he got the upper hand by tellin' them that he wasn't able to bear the college at all; an' that if he 'd go back to it he 'd soon folly his father."

"An' what turned him against the college? Was that thrue?"

"Thrue!—thrue indeed! The same youth was never at a loss for a piece of invintion whin it sarved him. No, the sarra word of thruth at all was in it. He soodhered an' palavered a daughter of Owen Connor's, Susy—all the daughther he has, indeed—before he wint to Maynewth at all, they say. She herself wasn't for marryin' him, in regard of a vow she had; but there 's no doubt but he made her fond of him, for he has a tongue that 'ud make black white, or white black, for that matther. So, be Gorra, he got the vow taken off of her by the Bishop; she soon recovered her health, for she was dyin' for love of him, an'—you seen their weddin'. It 'ud be worth your while to go a day's journey to get a sight of her—she 's allowed to be the purtiest girl that ever was in this part o' the counthry."

"Well! well! It 's a quare world. An' is the family all agreeable to it now?"

"Hut! where was the use of houldin' out aginst him? I tell you, he 'd make them agreeable to any think, wanst he tuck it into his head. Indeed, it 's he that has the great larnin' all out! Why, now, you 'd hardly b'lieve me, when I tell you that he 'd prove you to be an ass, in three minutes; make it as plain as the sun. He would; an' often made an ass o' myself."

"Why now that I look at you—aren't you Dan Murray's nephew?"

"Phadrick Murray, an' divil a one else, sure enough."

"How is your family, Phadrick? Why, man, you don't know your friends—my name 's Cahill."

"Is it Andy Cahill of Phuldhu? Why, thin, death alive, Andy, how is every bit of you? Andy, I 'm regulatin' everything at this weddin', an' you must turn over your horse till we have a dhrop for ould times, Bless my sowl! sure, I 'd know your brother round a corner; an' yourself, too, I ought to know, only that I didn't see you since you wor a slip of a gorsoon. Come away, man, sure thim men o' yours can take care o' the cattle. You 'll asily overtake thim."

"Throth, I don't care if I have a glass wid an ould friend. But, I hope your whiskey won't overtake me, Phadrick?"

"The never a fear of it, your father's son has too good a head for that. Ough! man alive, if you could stay for the weddin'! Divil a sich a let out ever was seen in the county widin the mimory of the ouldest man in it, as it 'ill be. Dinis is the boy that 'ud have the dacent thing or nothin'."

The grazier and Phadrick Murray then bent their steps to Owen Connor's house, where the wedding was held. It is unnecessary to say that Phadrick plied his new acquaintance to some purpose. Ere two hours passed the latter had forgotten his bullocks as completely as if he had never seen them, and his drovers were left to their own discretion in

effecting their sale. As for Andy Cahill, like many another sapient Irishman, he preferred his pleasure to his business, got drunk, and danced, and sung at Denis O'Shaughnessy's wedding, which we are bound to say was the longest, the most hospitable, and most frolicsome that ever has been remembered in the parish from that day to the present.

Phelim O'Toole, who had the honour of being that interesting personage, an only son, was heir to a snug estate of half an acre, which had been the family patrimony since the time of his grandfather, Tyrrell O'Toole, who won it from the *Sassenah* at the point of his reaping-hook, during a descent once made upon England by a body of "spalpeens," in the month of August. This resolute little band was led on by Tyrrell, who, having secured about eight guineas by the excursion, returned to his own country, with a coarse linen travelling-bag slung across his shoulder, a new hat in one hand, and a staff in the other. On reaching once more his native village of Teernarogarah, he immediately took half an acre, for which he paid a moderate rent in the shape of daily labour as a cotter. On this he resided until death, after which event, he was succeeded by his son, Larry O'Toole, the father of the "purty boy" who is about to shine in the following pages.

Phelim's father and mother had been married near seven years without the happiness of a family. This to both was a great affliction. Sheelah O'Toole was melancholy from night to morning, and Larry was melan-

choly from morning to night. Their cottage was silent and solitary; the floor and furniture had not the appearance of any cottage in which Irish children are wont to amuse themselves. When they rose in the morning, a miserable stillness prevailed around them; young voices were not heard —laughing eyes turned not on their parents—the melody of angry squabbles, as the urchins, in their parents' fancy, cuffed and scratched each other—half, or wholly naked among the ashes in the morning, soothed not the yearning hearts of Larry and his wife. No, no; there was none of this. Morning passed in a quietness hard to be borne: noon arrived, but the dismal, dreary sense of childishness hung upon the house and their hearts; night again returned, only to add its darkness to that which overshadowed the sorrowful spirits of this disconsolate couple.

For the first two or three years, they bore this privation with a strong confidence that it would not last. The heart, however, sometimes becomes tired of hoping, or unable to bear the burthen of expectation, which time only renders heavier. They first began to fret and pine, then to murmur, and finally to recriminate.

Sheelah wished for children, "to have the crathurs to spake to," she said, "and comfort us when we'd get ould an' helpless."

Larry cared not, provided they had a son to inherit the "half acre." This was the burthen of his wishes, for in all their altercations, his closing observation usually was—"well, but what's to become of the half acre?"

"What's to become of the half acre? Arrah what do I care for the half acre? It's not that you ought to be thinkin' of, but the dismal poor house we have, wid not the laugh or schreech of a single *pastiah* * in it from year's end to year's end."

"Well, Sheelah?"

"Well, yourself, Larry? To the *diouol* I pitch your half acre, man."

"To the *diouol* you pitch—What do you fly at me for?"

"Who's flyin' at you? They 'd have little tow on their rock that 'ud fly at *you*."

"You are flyin' at me; an' only you have a hard face, you wouldn't do it."

"A hard face! Indeed it's well come over wid us, to be tould that by the likes o' you! ha!"

"No matther for that! You had betther keep a soft tongue in your head, an' a civil one, in the mane time. Why did the divil timpt you to take a fancy to me at all?"

"That 's it. Throw the *grah* an' love I *once* had for you, in my teeth now. It 's a manly thing for you to do, an' you may be proud of it. Dear knows, it would be betther for me I had fell in consate wid any face but yours."

"I wish to goodness you had! I wouldn't be as I am to-day. There 's that half acre—"

"To the *diouol*, I say, I pitch yourself an' your half acre! Why do you be comin' acrass me wid your half acre? Eh?—Why do you?"

"Come now; don't be puttin' your hands agin your sides, an waggin' your impty head at me, like a rockin' stone."

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* A child.

"An' why do you be aggravatin' at me wid your half acre?"

"Bekase I have a good right to do it. What 'll become of it when I d—"

"——— That for you an' it, you poor excuse!"

"When I di———"

"——— That for you an' it, I say! That for you an' it, you atomy!"

"What 'll become of my half acre when I die? Did you hear *that?*"

"You ought to think of what 'll become of yourself, when you die; that's what you ought to think of; but little it throubles you, you sinful reprobate! Sure the neighbours despises you."

"That's a falsity; but they know the life I lade wid *you*. The edge of your tongue 's well known. They pity me, for bein' joined to the likes of you. You're bad tongue 's all you're good for."

"Aren't you afeard to be flyin' in the face o' Providence the way you are? An' to be ladin' me sich a heart-scalded life for no rason?"

"It's your own story your 're tellin'. Sure I haven't a day's pace wid you, or ever had these three years. But wait till next harvest, an' if I'm spared, I'll go to England. Whin I do, I've a consate in my head, that you 'll never see my face agin."

"Oh, you know that's an' ould story wid you. Many a time you threatened us wid that afore. Who knows but you 'd be dhrowned on your way, an' thin we 'd get another husband."

"An' be these blessed tongs, I 'll do it afore I'm much ouldher!"

"An' lave me here to starve an' sthruggle by myself! Desart me like a villain, to poverty an' hardship! Marciful Mother of Heaven, look down upon me this day! but I'm the ill-thrated, an' ill-used poor crathur, by a man that I don't, an' never did, desarve it from! An' all in regard that that 'half acre' must go to strangers! Och! oh!"

"Ay! now take to the cryin', do; rock yourself over the ashes, an' wipe your eyes wid the corner of your apron; but, I say agin, *what 's to become of the half acre?*"

"Oh, God forgive you, Larry! That's the worst I say to you, you poor half-dead blaguard!"

"Why do you massacray me wid your tongue as you do?"

"Go an—go an. I won't make you an answer, you atomy! That's what I'll do. The heavens above turn your heart this day, and give me strinth to bear my throubles an' heart-burnin', sweet Queen o' Consolation! Or take me into the arms of Parodies, sooner nor be as I am, wid a poor baste of a villain, that I never turn my tongue on, barrin' to tell him the kind of a man he is, the blaguard!"

"You're betther than you desarve to be!"

To this, Sheelah made no further reply; on the contrary, she sat smoking her pipe with a significant silence, that was only broken by an occasional groan, an ejaculation, or a singularly devout upturning of the eyes to heaven, accompanied by a shake of the head, at once condemnatory and philosophical; indicative of her dissent from what he said, as well as of her patience in bearing it.

Larry, however, usually proceeded to combat all her gestures by *viva voce* argument; for every shake of her head he had an appropriate answer: but without being able to move her from the obstinate silence she maintained. Having thus the field to himself, and feeling rather

annoyed by the want of an antagonist, he argued on in the same form of dispute, whilst she, after first calming her own spirit by the composing effects of the pipe, usually cut him short with——

"Here, take a blast o' this, maybe it'll settle you."

This was received in silence. The good man smoked on, and every puff appeared as an evaporation of his anger. In due time he was as placid as herself, drew his breath in a grave composed manner, laid his pipe quietly on the hob, and went about his business as if nothing had occurred between them.

These bickerings were strictly private, with the exception of some disclosures made to Sheelah's mother and sisters. Even these were thrown out rather as insinuations that all was not right, than as direct assertions that they lived unhappily. Before strangers they were perfect turtles.

Larry, according to the notices of his life furnished by Sheelah, was "as good a husband as ever broke the world's bread;" and Sheelah "was as good a poor man's wife as ever threw a gown over her shoulders." Notwithstanding all this caution, their little quarrels took wind; their unhappiness became known. Larry, in consequence of a failing he had, was the cause of this. He happened to be one of those men who can conceal nothing when in a state of intoxication. Whenever he indulged in liquor too freely, the veil which discretion had drawn over their recriminations was put aside, and a dolorous history of their weaknesses, doubts, hopes, and wishes, most unscrupulously given to every person on whom the complainant could fasten. When sober, he had no recollection of this, so that many a conversation of cross-purposes took place between him and his neighbours, with reference to the state of his own domestic inquietude, and their want of children.

One day a poor mendicant came in at dinner hour, and stood as if to solicit alms. It is customary in Ireland, when any person of that description appears during meal times, to make him wait until the meal is over, after which he is supplied with the fragments. No sooner had the *boccagh*—as a certain class of beggars is termed—advanced past the jamb, than he was desired to sit until the dinner should be concluded. In the mean time, with the tact of an adept in his calling, he began to ingratiate himself with Larry and his wife; and after sounding the simple couple upon their private history, he discovered that want of children was the occasion of their unhappiness.

"Well, good people," said the pilgrim, after listening to a dismal story on the subject, "don't be cast down, sure, whether or not. There's a Holy Well that I can direct yez to in the county ——. Any one, wid trust in the Saint that's over it, who'll make a pilgrimage to it on the Patthern day, won't be the worse for it. When you go there," he added, "jist turn to a Lucky Stone that's at the side of the well, say a Rosary before it, and at the end of every dicken (decade) kiss it once, ache of you. Then you're to go round the well nine times, upon your bare knees, sayin' your Pathers an' Aves all the time. When that's over, lave a ribbon or a bit of your dress behind you, or somethin' by way of an offerin', thin go into a tent an' refresh yourselves, an' for that matther, take a dance or two; come home, live happily, an' trust to the holy saint for the rest."

A gleam of newly awakened hope might be discovered lurking in the eyes of this simple pair, who felt those natural yearnings of heart incident to such as are without offspring.

They looked forward with deep anxiety to the anniversary of the Patron Saint; and when it arrived, none certainly who attended it, felt a more absorbing interest in the success of the pilgrimage than they did.

The days on which these pilgrimages are performed at such places are called Pattern or Patron days. The journey to holy wells or holy lakes is termed a Pilgrimage, or more commonly a Station. It is sometimes enjoined by the priest, as an act of penance; and sometimes undertaken voluntarily, as a devotional work of great merit in the sight of God. The crowds in many places amount to from five hundred to a thousand, and often to two, three, four, or five thousand people.

These Stations have, for the most part, been placed in situations remarkable for wild and savage grandeur, or for soft, exquisite, and generally solitary beauty. They may be found on the high and rugged mountain top; or sunk in the bottom of some still and lonely glen, far removed from the ceaseless din of the world. Immediately beside them, or close in their vicinity, stand the ruins of probably a picturesque old abbey, or perhaps a modern chapel. The appearance of these gray, ivy-covered walls is strongly calculated to stir up in the minds of the people the memory of by-gone times, when their religion, with its imposing solemnities, was the religion of the land. It is for this reason, probably, that patrons are countenanced; for if there be not a political object in keeping them up, it is beyond human ingenuity to conceive how either religion or morals can be improved by debauchery, drunkenness and bloodshed.

Let the reader, in order to understand the situation of the place we are describing, imagine to himself a stupendous cliff overhanging a green glen, into which tumbles a silver stream down a height of two or three hundred feet. At the bottom of this rock, a few yards from the basin formed by the cascade, in a sunless nook, was a well of cool, delicious water. This was the "Holy Well," out of which issued a slender stream, that joined the rivulet formed by the cascade. On the shrubs which grew out of the crag-cliffs around it, might be seen innumerable rags bleached by the weather out of their original colour, small wooden crosses, locks of human hair, buttons, and other substitutes for property; poverty allowing the people to offer it only by fictitious emblems. Lower down in the glen, on the river's bank, was a smooth green, admirably adapted for the dance, which, notwithstanding the religious rites, is the heart and soul of a Patron.

On that morning a vast influx of persons, male and female, old and young, married and single, crowded eagerly towards the well. Among them might be noticed the blind, the lame, the paralytic, and such as were afflicted with various other diseases; nor were those good men and their wives who had no offspring to be omitted. The mendicant, the pilgrim, the boccagh, together with every other description of impostors, remarkable for attending such places, were the first on the ground, all busy in their respective vocations. The highways, the fields, and the *boreens*, or bridle-roads, were filled with living streams of people pressing forward to

this great scene of fun and religion. The devotees could in general be distinguished from the country folks by their Pharisaical and penitential visages, as well as by their not wearing shoes; for the Stations to such places were formerly made with bare feet: most persons now, however, content themselves with stripping off their shoes and stockings on coming within the precincts of the holy ground. Human beings are not the only description of animals that perform pilgrimages to holy wells and blessed lakes. Cows, horses, and sheep are made to go through their duties, either by way of prevention, or cure, of the diseases incident to them. This is not to be wondered at, when it is known that in their religion every domestic animal has its patron saint, to whom its owner may at any time pray on its behalf.

When the crowd was collected, nothing in the shape of an assembly could surpass it in the originality of its appearance. In the glen were constructed a number of tents, where whisky and refreshments might be had in abundance. Every tent had a fiddler or a piper; many two of them. From the top of a pole that ran up from the roof of each tent, was suspended the symbol by which the owner of it was known by his friends and acquaintances. Here swung a salt herring or a turf; there a shillelah; in a third place a shoe, in a fourth place a wisp of hay, in a fifth an old hat, and so on with the rest.

The tents stood at a short distance from the scene of devotion at the well, but not so far as to prevent the spectator from both seeing and hearing what went on in each. Around the well, on bare knees, moved a body of people, thickly wedged together, some praying, some screaming, some excoriating their neighbours' shins, and others dragging them out of their way by the hair of the head. Exclamations of pain from the sick or lame, thumping oaths in Irish, recriminations in broken English, and prayers in bog Latin, all rose at once to the ears of the patron saint, who, we are inclined to think—could he have heard or seen his worshippers—would have disclaimed them altogether.

"For the sake of the Holy Virgin, keep your sharp elbows out o' my ribs."

"My blessin' an you, young man, an' don't be lanin' an me, i' you plase!"

"*Damnho sherry orth, a rogarah ruah!** what do you mane? Is it my back you're brakin'?"

"Hell purshue you, you ould sinner, can't you keep the *spike* of your crutch out o' my *stomach!* If you love me tell me so; but, by the livin' farmer, I'll take no such hints as *that!*"

"*I'm* a pilgrim, an' don't brake my leg upon the rock, an' my blessin' an you!"

"Oh, murdher sheery! my poor child 'ill be smodhered!"

"My heart's curse an you! is it the ould cripple you're thrampin' over?"

"Here, Barny, blood alive, give this purty young girl a lift, your sowl, or she'll soon be undhermost!"

> "'Och, 'twas on a Christmas mornin'
> That Jeroosillim was born in
> The Holy Land'——

* Eternal perdition on you, you red rogue.

Oh, my neck 's broke!—the curse——Oh! I'm kilt fairly, so I am! The curse o' Cromwell an you, an' hould away—

'The Holy Land adornin'
All by the Baltic Say.
Three angels on a Station,
All in deep meditation,
Wor takin' raycrayation,
All by the'——

contints o' the book if you don't hould away, I say agin, an' let me go an wid my *rann*, it 'll be worse for you!—

'Wor takin' raycrayation,
All by the Baltic Say!!'"

"Help the ould woman there."

"Queen o' Patriots pray for us!—St. Abraham——go to the divil, you bosthoon; is it crushin' my sore leg you are?—St. Abraham pray for us! St. Isinglass, pray for us! St. Jonathan,——musha, I wisht you wor in America, honest man, instid o' twistin' my arm like a *gad?*—St. Jonathan, pray for us! Holy Nineveh, look down upon us wid compression an' resolution this day! Blessed Jerooslim, throw down compuncture an' meditation upon us Chrystyeens assembled here afore you to offer up our sins! Oh, grant us, blessed Catasthrophy, the holy virtues of Timptation an' Solitude, through the improvement an' accommodation of St. Kolumbkill! To him I offer up this button, a bit o' the waistband o' my own breeches, an' a taste of my wife's petticoat, in remimbrance of us havin' made this holy Station; an' may they rise up in glory to prove it for us at the last day! Amin!"

Such was the character of the prayers and ejaculations which issued from the lips of the motley group that scrambled, and crushed, and screamed, on their knees around the well. In the midst of this ignorance and absurdity, there were visible, however, many instances of piety, goodness of heart, and simplicity of character. From such you could hear neither oath nor exclamation. They complied with the usages of the place modestly and attentively; though not insensible, at the same time, to the strong disgust which the general conduct of those who were both superstitious and wicked was calculated to excite. A little from the well, just where its waters mingled with those of the cascade, men and women might be seen washing the blood off their knees, and dipping such parts of their body as were afflicted with local complaints into the stream. This part of the ceremony was anything but agreeable to the eye. Most of those who went round the well drank its waters; and several of them filled flasks and bottles with it, which they brought home for the benefit of such members of the family as could not attend in person.

Whilst all this went forward at the well, scenes of a different kind were enacted lower down among the tents. No sooner had the penitents got the difficult rites of the Station over, than they were off to the whisky; and decidedly, after the grinding of their bare knees upon the hard rock—after the pushing, crushing, and exhaustion of bodily strength which they had been forced to undergo—we say, that the comforts and refresh-

ments to be had in the tents were very seasonable. Here the dancing, shouting, singing, courting, drinking, and fighting, formed one wild uproar of noise, that was perfectly astounding. The leading boys and the prettiest girls of the parish were all present, partaking in the rustic revelry. Tipsy men were staggering in every direction; fiddles were playing, pipes were squeaking, men were rushing in detached bodies to some fight, women were doctoring the heads of such as had been beaten, and factions were collecting their friends for a fresh battle. Here you might see a grove of shillelahs up, and hear the crash of the onset; and in another place, the heads of the dancing parties bobbing up and down in brisk motion among the crowd that surrounded them. The pilgrim, having now gone through his Station, stood hemmed in by a circle of those who wanted to purchase his beads or his scapulars. The ballad-singer had his own mob, from among whom his voice might be heard rising in its purest tones to the praise of—

"Brave O'Connell, the Liberathur,
An' great Salvathur of Ireland's Isle!"

As evening approached, the whisky brought out the senseless prejudices of parties and factions in a manner quite consonant to the habits of the people. Those who, in deciding their private quarrels, had in the early part of the day beat and abused each other, now united as the subordinate branches of a greater party, for the purpose of opposing in one general body some other hostile faction. These fights are usually commenced by a challenge from one party to another, in which a person from the opposite side is simply, and often very good-humouredly, invited to assert, that "black is the white of his enemy's eye;" or to touch the old coat which he is pleased to trail after him between the two opposing powers. This characteristic challenge is soon accepted; the knocking down and yelling are heard; stones fly, and every available weapon is pressed into the service on both sides. In this manner the battle proceeds, until, probably, a life or two is lost. Bones, too, are savagely broken, and blood copiously spilled, by men who scarcely know the remote cause of the enmity between the parties.

Such is a hasty sketch of the Pattern, as it is called in Ireland, at which Larry and Sheelah duly performed their station. We, for our parts, should be sorry to see the innocent pastimes of a people abolished; but, surely, customs which perpetuate scenes of profligacy and crime should not be suffered to stain the pure and holy character of religion.

It is scarcely necessary to inform our readers that Larry O'Toole and Sheelah complied with every rite of the Station. To kiss the "Lucky Stone," however, was their principal duty. Larry gave it a particularly honest smack, and Sheelah impressed it with all the ardour of a devotee. Having refreshed themselves in the tent, they returned home, and, in somewhat less than a year from that period, found themselves the happy parents of an heir to the half-acre, no less a personage than young Phelim, who was called after St. Phelim, the *patron* of the "*Lucky Stone.*"

The reader perceives that Phelim was born under particularly auspicious influence. His face was the herald of affection everywhere. From

the moment of his birth, Larry and Sheelah were seldom known to have a dispute. Their whole future life was, with few exceptions, one unchanging honeymoon. Had Phelim been deficient in comeliness, it would have mattered not a *crona baun*. Phelim, on the contrary, promised to be a beauty; both his parents thought it, felt it, asserted it; and who had a better right to be acquainted, as Larry said, "wid the outs an' ins, the ups an' downs of his face, the darlin' swaddy!"

For the first ten years of his life Phelim could not be said to owe the tailor much; nor could the covering which he wore be, without more antiquarian lore than we can give to it, exactly classed under any particular term by which the various parts of human dress are known. He himself, like some of our great poets, was externally well acquainted with the elements. The sun and he were particularly intimate; wind and rain were his brothers, and frost also distantly related to him. With mud he was hand and glove, and not a bog in the parish, or a quagmire in the neighbourhood, but sprung up under Phelim's tread, and threw him forward with the brisk vibration of an old acquaintance. Touching his dress, however, in the early part of his life, if he was clothed with nothing else, he was clothed with mystery. Some assert that a cast-off pair of his father's nether garments might be seen upon him each Sunday, the wrong side foremost, in accommodation with some economy of his mother's, who thought it safest, in consequence of his habits, to join them in this inverted way to a cape which he wore on his shoulders. We ourselves have seen one, who saw another, who saw Phelim in a pair of stockings which covered him from his knee-pans to his haunches, where, in the absence of waistbands, they made a pause—a breach existing from that to the small of his back. The person who saw all this affirmed, at the same time, that there was a dearth of cloth about the skirts of the integument which stood him instead of a coat. He bore no bad resemblance, he said, to a moulting fowl, with scanty feathers, running before a gale in the farm yard.

Phelim's want of dress in his merely boyish years being, in a great measure, the national costume of some hundred thousand young Hibernians in his rank of life, deserves a still more particular notice. His infancy we pass over; but from the period at which he did *not* enter into small clothes, he might be seen every Sunday morning, or on some important festival, issuing from his father's mansion, with a piece of old cloth tied about him from the middle to the knees, leaving a pair of legs visible, that were mottled over with characters which would, if found on an Egyptian pillar, put an antiquary to the necessity of constructing a new alphabet to decipher them. This, or the inverted breeches, with his father's flannel waistcoat, or an old coat that swept the ground at least two feet behind him, constituted his state dress. On week days he threw off this finery, and contented himself, if the season were summer, with appearing in a dun-coloured shirt, which resembled a noun-substantive, for it could stand alone. The absence of soap and water is sometimes used as a substitute for milling linen among the lower Irish; and so effectually had Phelim's single change been milled in this manner, that, when disenshirting at night, he usually laid it standing at his bedside where it reminded one of frosted linen in everything but whiteness.

This, with but little variation, was Phelim's dress until his tenth year. Long before that, however, he evinced those powers of attraction which constituted so remarkable a feature in his character. He won all hearts; the chickens and ducks were devotedly attached to him; the cow, which the family always *intended* to buy, was in the habit of licking Phelim in his dreams; the two goats which they actually did buy, treated him like one of themselves. Among the first and last he spent a great deal of his early life; for as the floor of his father's house was but a continuation of the dunghill, or the dunghill a continuation of the floor, we know not rightly which, he had a larger scope, and a more unsavoury pool than usual, for amusement. Their dunghill, indeed, was the finest of its size and kind to be seen; quite a tasteful thing, and so convenient, that he could lay himself down at the hearth, and roll out to its foot, after which he ascended it on his legs, with all the elasticity of a young poet triumphantly climbing Parnassus.

One of the greatest wants which Phelim experienced in his young days, was the want of a capacious pocket. We insinuate nothing; because with respect to his agility in climbing fruit-trees, it was only a species of exercise to which he was addicted—the eating and carrying away of the fruit being merely incidental, or, probably, the result of abstraction, which, as every one knows, proves what is termed "the Absence of Genius." In these ambitious exploits, however, there is no denying that he bitterly regretted the want of a pocket; and in connection with this we have only to add, that most of his solitary walks were taken about orchards and gardens, the contents of which he has been often seen to contemplate with deep interest. This, to be sure, might proceed from a provident regard to health, for it is a well-known fact that he has frequently returned home in the evenings, distended like a Boa Constrictor after a gorge; yet no person was ever able to come at the cause of his inflation. There were, to be sure, suspicions abroad, and it was mostly found that depredations in some neighbouring orchard or garden had been committed a little before the periods in which it was supposed the distention took place. We mention these things after the example of those "d——d good-natured" biographers who write great men's lives of late, only for the purpose of showing that there could be no truth in such suspicions. Phelim, we assure an enlightened public, was voraciously fond of fruit; he was frequently inflated, too, after the manner of those who indulge therein to excess; fruit was always missed immediately after the periods of his distention, so that it was impossible *he* could have been concerned in the depredations then made upon the neighbouring orchards. In addition to this, we would beg modestly to add, that the pomonian temperament is incompatible with the other qualities for which he was famous. His parents were too ignorant of those little eccentricities which, had they known them, would have opened up a correct view of the splendid materials for village greatness which he possessed, and which, probably, were nipped in their bud for the want of a pocket to his breeches, or rather by the want of a breeches to his pocket; for such was the wayward energy of his disposition, that he ultimately succeeded in getting the latter, though it certainly often

failed him to procure the breeches. In fact, it was a misfortune to him that he was the son of his father and mother at all. Had he been a second Melchizedec, and got into breeches in time, the virtues which circumstances suppressed in his heart might have flourished like cauliflowers, though the world would have lost all the advantages arising from the splendour of his talents at going naked.

Another fact, in justice to his character, must not be omitted. His *penchant* for fruit was generally known; but few persons, at the period we are describing, were at all aware that a love of whisky lurked as a predominant trait in his character, to be brought out at a future era in his life.

Before Phelim reached his tenth year, he and his parents had commenced hostilities. Many were their efforts to subdue some peculiarities of his temper which then began to appear. Phelim, however, being an only son, possessed high vantage ground. Along with other small matters which he was in the habit of picking up, might be reckoned a readiness at swearing. Several other things also made their appearance in his parents' cottage, for whose presence there, except through his instrumentality, they found it rather difficult to account. Spades, shovels, rakes, tubs, frying-pans, and many other articles of domestic use, were transferred, as if by magic, to Larry's cabin.

As Larry and his wife were both honest, these things were, of course, restored to their owners, the moment they could be ascertained. Still, although this honest couple's integrity was known, there were many significant looks turned upon Phelim, and many spirited prophecies uttered with especial reference to him, all of which hinted at the probability of his dying something in the shape of a perpendicular death. This habit, then, of adding to their furniture, was one cause of the hostility between him and his parents; we say one, for there were at least a good round dozen besides. His touch, for instance, was fatal to crockery; he stripped his father's Sunday clothes of their buttons, with great secrecy and skill; he was a dead shot at the panes of his neighbours' windows; a perfect necromancer at sucking eggs through pin-holes; took great delight in calling home the neighbouring farmers' workmen to dinner an hour before it was ready; and was in fact a perfect master in many other ingenious manifestations of character, ere he reached his twelfth year.

Now, it was about this period that the small-pox made its appearance in the village. Indescribable was the dismay of Phelim's parents, lest he among others might become a victim to it. Vaccination had not then surmounted the prejudices with which every discovery beneficial to mankind is at first met; and the people were left principally to the imposture of quacks, or the cunning of certain persons called "fairy men" or "sonsie women." Nothing remained now but that this formidable disease should be met by all the power and resources of superstition. The first thing the mother did was to get a gospel consecrated by the priest, for the purpose of guarding Phelim against evil. What is termed a Gospel, and worn as a kind of charm about the person, is simply a slip of paper, on which are written by the priest the few first verses of the Gospel of St. John. This, however, being worn for no specific

purpose, was incapable of satisfying the honest woman. Superstition had its own peculiar remedy for the small-pox, and Sheelah was resolved to apply it. Accordingly she borrowed a neighbour's ass, drove it home with Phelim, however, on its back, took the interesting youth by the nape of the neck, and, in the name of the Trinity, shoved him three times under it, and three times over it. She then put a bit of bread into its mouth, until the ass had mumbled it a little, after which she gave the savoury morsel to Phelim, as a *bonne bouche*. This was one preventive against the small-pox; but another was to be tried.

She next clipped off the extremities of Phelim's elf locks, tied them in linen that was never bleached, and hung them beside the Gospel about his neck. This was her second cure; but there was still a third to be applied. She got the largest onion possible, which, having cut into nine parts, she hung from the roof tree of the cabin, having first put the separated parts together. It is supposed that this has the power of drawing infection of any kind to itself. It is permitted to remain untouched, until the disease has passed from the neighbourhood, when it is buried as far down in the earth as a single man can dig. This was a third cure; but there was still a fourth. She borrowed ten asses' halters from her neighbours, who, on hearing that they were for Phelim's use, felt particular pleasure in obliging her. Having procured these, she pointed them one by one at Phelim's neck, until the number nine was completed. The tenth she put on him, and with the end of it in her hand, led him like an ass, nine mornings, before sunrise, to a south-running stream, which he was obliged to cross. On doing this, two conditions were to be fulfilled on the part of Phelim; he was bound, in the first place, to keep his mouth filled, during the ceremony, with a certain fluid which must be nameless: in the next, to be silent from the moment he left home until his return.

Sheelah having satisfied herself that everything calculated to save her darling from the small-pox was done, felt considerably relieved, and hoped that whoever might be infected, Phelim would escape. On the morning when the last journey to the river had been completed, she despatched him home with the halters. Phelim, however, wended his way to a little hazel copse, below the house, where he deliberately twined the halters together, and erected a swing-swang, with which he amused himself till hunger brought him to his dinner.

"Phelim, you idle thief, what kep you away till now?"

"Oh, mudher, mudher, gi' me a piece o' *arran?* (bread.)

"Why, here 's the praties done for your dinner. What kep you?"

"Oh, be gorra, it 's well you ever seen me at all, so it is!"

"Why," said his father, "what happened you?"

"Oh, bedad, a terrible thing all out. As I was crassin' Dunroe Hill, I thramped on *hungry grass*. First, I didn't know what kem over me, I got so wake; an' every step I wint, 'twas waker an' waker I was growin,' till at long last, down I dhrops, an' couldn't move hand or fut. I dunna how long I lay there, so I don't; but anyhow, who should be *sthreelin'* acrass the hill, but an ould *baccagh*.

"'My *bouchaleen dhas*,' says he—'my beautiful boy,' says he—'you're

in a bad state I find. You 've thramped upon Dunroe *hungry-grass*, an only for somethin' it 's a *prabeen* you 'd be, afore ever you 'd see home. Can you spake at all?' says he.

"'Oh, murdher,' says I, 'I b'lieve not.'

"'Well here,' says the *baccagh* 'open your purty *gub*, an' take in a thrifle of this male, an' you 'll soon be stout enough.' Well, to be sure, it bates the world! I had hardly tasted the male, whin I found myself as well as ever; bekase you know, mudher, that 's the cure for it. 'Now,' says the *baccagh*, 'this is the spot the fairies planted their hungry grass an, so you 'll know it agin when you see it. What 's your name?' says he.

"'Phelim O'Toole,' says I.

"'Well,' says he, 'go home an' tell your father an' mother to offer up a prayer to St. Phelim, your namesake, in regard that only for him you 'd be a *corp* before any relief would a come near you; or, at any rate, wid the fairies.'"

The father and mother, although with a thousand proofs before them that Phelim, so long as he could at all contrive a lie, would never speak truth, yet were so blind to his well-known propensity, that they always believed the lie to be truth, until they discovered it to be a falsehood. When he related a story, for instance, which carried not only improbability, but impossibility on the face of it, they never questioned his veracity. The neighbours, to be sure, were vexed and nettled at the obstinacy of their credulity; especially on reflecting that they were as sceptical in giving credence to the narrative of any other person, as all rational people ought to be. The manner of training up Phelim, and Phelim's method of governing them, had become a by-word in the village. "Take a sthraw to him, like Sheelah O'Toole," was often ironically said to mothers remarkable for mischievous indulgence to their children.

The following day proved that no charm could protect Phelim from the small-pox. Every symptom of that disease became quite evident; and the grief of his doating parents amounted to distraction. Neither of them could be declared perfectly sane; they knew not how to proceed—what regimen to adopt for him, nor what remedies to use. A week elapsed, but each succeeding day found him in a more dangerous state. At length, by the advice of some of the neighbours, an old crone, called "Sonsy Mary," was called in to administer relief through the medium of certain powers which were thought to be derived from something holy and also supernatural. She brought a mysterious bottle, of which he was to take every third spoonful, three times a day; it was to be administered by the hand of a young girl of virgin innocence, who was also to breathe three times down his throat, holding his nostrils closed with her fingers. The father and mother were to repeat a certain number of prayers; to promise against swearing, and to kiss the hearth-stone nine times—the one turned north, and the other south. All these ceremonies were performed with care, but Phelim's malady appeared to set them at defiance; and the old crone would have lost her character in consequence, were it not that Larry, on the day of the cure, after having promised not to swear, let fly an oath at a hen, whose cackling disturbed Phelim. This saved her character, and threw Larry and Sheelah into fresh despair.

They had nothing now for it but the "fairy man," to whom, despite the awful mystery of his character, they resolved to apply rather than see their only son taken from them for ever. Larry proceeded without delay to the wise man's residence, after putting a small phial of holy water in his pocket to protect himself from fairy influence. The house in which this person lived was admirably in accordance with his mysterious character. One gable of it was formed by the mound of a fairy Rath, against which the cabin stood endwise; within a mile there was no other building; the country around it was a sheep-walk, green, and beautifully interspersed with two or three solitary glens, in one of which might be seen a cave that was said to communicate under ground with the rath. A ridge of high-peaked mountains ran above it, whose evening shadow, in consequence of their form, fell down on each side of the rath, without obscuring its precincts. It lay south; and, such was the power of superstition, that during summer, the district in which it stood was thought to be covered with a light and silence decidedly supernatural. In spring, it was the first to be in verdure, and in autumn, the last. Nay, in winter itself, the rath and the adjoining valleys never ceased to be green. These circumstances were not attributed to the nature of the soil, to its southern situation, nor to the fact of its being pasture land; but simply to the power of the fairies, who were supposed to keep its verdure fresh for their own revels.

When Larry entered the house, which had an air of comfort and snugness beyond the common, a tall thin pike of a man, about sixty years of age, stood before him. He wore a brown great-coat that fell far short of his knees; his small-clothes were closely fitted to thighs not thicker than hand telescopes; on his legs were drawn gray woollen stockings, rolled up about six inches over his small-clothes; his head was covered by a bay bob-wig, on which was a little round hat, with the edge of the leaf turned up in every direction. His face was short and sallow; his chin peaked; his nose small and turned up. If we add to this, a pair of skeleton-like hands and arms projecting about eight inches beyond the sleeves of his coat; two fiery ferret-eyes; and a long small holly wand, higher than himself, we have the outline of this singular figure.

"God save you, nabour," said Larry.

"Save you, save you, nabour," he replied, without pronouncing the name of the deity.

"This is a thryin' time," said Larry, "to them that has childhre."

The fairy-man fastened his red glittering eyes upon him, with a sinister glance that occasioned Larry to feel rather uncomfortable.

"So you venthured to come to the fairy-man?"

"It is about our son, an' he all we ha——"

"Whisht!" said the man, waving his hand with a commanding air; "Whisht; I wish you wor out o' this, for it's a bad time to be here. Listen! Listen! Do you hear nothing?"

Larry changed colour. "I do," he replied—"the Lord protect me! Is that *them?*"

"What did you hear?" said the man.

"Why," returned the other, "I heard the bushes of the rath all movin', jist as if a blast o' wind came among them!"

"Whisht," said the fairy-man, "they're here; you mustn't open your lips while you're in the house. I know what you want, an' will see your son. Do you hear anything more? If you do, lay your fore-finger along your nose; but don't spake."

Larry heard, with astonishment, the music of a pair of bag-pipes. The tune played was one which, according to a popular legend, was first played by Satan; it is called "Go to the Devil and shake yourself." To our own knowledge, the peasantry in certain parts of Ireland refuse to sing it for the above reason. The mystery of the music was heightened too, by the fact of its being played, as Larry thought, behind the gable of the cabin, which stood against the side of the rath, out of which, indeed, it seemed to proceed.

Larry laid his finger along his nose, as he had been desired; and this appearing to satisfy the Fairy-man, he waved his hand to the door, thus intimating that his visitor should depart; which he did immediately, but not without observing that this wild-looking being closed and bolted the door after him.

It is unnecessary to say that he was rather anxious to get off the premises of the good people; he therefore lost little time until he arrived at his own cabin; but judge of his wonder when, on entering it, he found the long-legged spectre awaiting his return.

"*Banaght dhea orrin!*" he exclaimed, starting back; "the blessin' o' God be upon us! Is it here before me you are?"

"Hould your tongue, man," said the other, with a smile of mysterious triumph. "Is it that you wondher at? Ha, ha! That's little of it!"

"But how did you know my name? or who I was? or where I lived at all? Heaven protect us! It's beyant belief, clane out."

"Hould your tongue," replied the man; "don't be axin' me any thing o' the kind. Clear out both of ye, till I begin my *pisthrogues* wid the sick child. Clear out, I say."

With some degree of apprehension, Larry and Sheelah left the house as they had been ordered, and the Fairy-man having pulled out a flask of poteen administered a dose of it to Phelim; and never yet did patient receive his medicine with such a relish. He licked his lips, and fixed his eye upon it with a longing look.

"Be Gorra," said he, "that's fine stuff entirely. Will you lave me the bottle?"

"No," said the Fairy-man, "but I'll call an' give you a little of it wanst a day."

"Ay do," replied Phelim; "the divil a fear o' me, if I get enough of it. I hope I'll see you often."

The Fairy-man kept his word; so that what with his bottle, a hardy constitution, and light bed-clothes, Phelim got the upper hand of his malady. In a month he was again on his legs; but, alas! his complexion, though not changed to deformity, was wofully out of joint. His principal blemish, in addition to the usual marks left by this complaint, consisted in a drooping of his left eye-lid, which gave to his whole face a cast highly ludicrous.

When Phelim felt thoroughly recovered, he claimed a pair of "leather

If you don't know the "way" &c.

*Phelim O'Toole p.283.*

crackers,"* a hare-skin cap and a coat, with a pertinacity which kept the worthy couple in a state of inquietude, until they complied with his importunity. Henceforth he began to have everything his own way. His parents, sufficiently thankful that he was spared to them, resolved to thwart him no more.

"It 's well we have him at all," said his mother; "sure if we hadn't him, we 'd be breakin' our hearts, and sayin' if it 'ud plase God to send him back to us, that we 'd be happy even wid givin' him his own way."

"They say it breaks their strinth, too," replied his father, "to be crubbin' them in too much, an' snappin' at thim for every hand's turn, an' I'm sure it does too."

"Doesn't he become the pock-marks well, the crathur?" said the mother.

"Become!" said the father; "but doesn't the droop in his eye set him off all to pieces!"

"Ay," observed the mother, "an' how the crathur went round among all the neighbours to show them the 'leather crackers!' To see his little pride out o' the hare-skin cap, too, wid the hare's ears stickin' out of his temples. That an' the droopin' eye undher them, makes him look so cunnin' an' ginteel, that one can't help havin' their heart fixed upon him."

"He 'd look betther still, if that ould coat wasn't sweepin' the ground behind him; an' what 'ud you think to put a pair o' *martyeens* on his legs to hide the mazles? He might go anywhere thin."

"Throth he might; but Larry, what in the world wide could be in the Fairy-man's bottle, that Phelim took sich a likin' for it? He tould me this mornin' that he 'd suffer to have the pock agin, set in case he was cured wid the same bottle."

"Well, the Heaven be praised, any how, that we have a son for the half-acre, Sheelah."

"Amin! An' let us take good care of him, now that he 's spared to us."

Phelim's appetite, after his recovery, was anything but a joke to his father. He was now seldom at home, except during meal times; for wherever fun or novelty was to be found, Phelim was present. He became a regular attendant upon all the sportsmen. To such he made himself very useful by his correct knowledge of the best covers for game, and the best pools for fish. He was acquainted with every rood of land in the parish; knew with astonishing accuracy where coveys were to be sprung, and hares started. No hunt was without him; such was his wind and speed of foot, that to follow a chase and keep up with the horsemen, was to him only a matter of sport. When day-light passed, night presented him with amusements suitable to itself. No wake, for instance, could escape him; a dance without young Phelim O'Toole would have been a thing worthy to be remembered. He was zealously devoted to cock-fighting; on Shrove-Tuesday he shouted loudest among the crowd that attended the sport of throwing at cocks tied to a stake; foot-ball and hurling never occurred without him. Bull-baiting—for it was common in his youth—

* Breeches made of sheep's shin, so called from the noise they make in walking or running.

was luxury to him; and, ere he reached fourteen, every one knew Phelim O'Toole as an adept at card-playing. Wherever a sheep, a leg of mutton, a dozen of bread, or a bottle of whisky was put up in a shebeen house, to be played for by the country gamblers at the five and ten, or spoil'd five, Phelim always took a hand and was generally successful. On these occasions he was frequently charged with an over-refined dexterity; but Phelim usually swore, in vindication of his own innocence, until he got black in the face, as the phrase among such characters goes.

The reader is to consider him now about fifteen—a stout, overgrown, unwashed cub. His parents' anxiety that he should grow strong, prevented them from training him to any kind of employment. He was eternally going about in quest of diversion; and wherever a knot of idlers was to be found, there was Phelim. He had, up to this period, never worn a shoe, nor a single article of dress that had been made for himself, with the exception of one or two pair of sheep-skin small clothes. In this way he passed his time, bare-legged, without shoes, clothed in an old coat much too large for him, his neck open, and his sooty locks covered with the hare-skin cap, the ears as usual sticking out above his brows. Much of his time was spent in setting the idle boys of the village to fight; and in carrying lying challenges from one to another. He himself was seldom without a broken head or a black eye; for in Ireland, he who is known to be fond of quarrelling, as the people say, usually "gets enough an' lavins of it." Larry and Sheelah, thinking it now high time that something should be done with Phelim, thought it necessary to give him some share of education. Phelim opposed this bitterly as an unjustifiable encroachment upon his personal liberty; but by bribing him with the first and only suit of clothes he had yet got, they at length succeeded in prevailing on him to go.

The school to which he was sent, happened to be kept in what is called an Inside Kiln. This kind of kiln is usually—but less so now than formerly—annexed to respectable farmers' outhouses, to which, in agricultural districts, it forms a very necessary appendage. It also serves at the same time as a barn, the kiln-pot being sunk in the shape of an inverted cone at one end, but divided from the barn floor by a wall about three feet high. From this wall beams run across the kiln-pot, over which, in a transverse direction, are laid a number of rafters like the joists of a loft, but not fastened. These ribs are covered with straw, over which again is spread a winnow cloth to keep the grain from being lost. The fire is sunk on a level with the bottom of the kiln-pot, that is, about eight or ten feet below the floor of the barn. The descent to it is by stairs formed at the side wall. We have been thus minute in describing it, because, as the reader will presently perceive, the feats of Phelim render it necessary.

On the first day of his entering the school, he presented himself with a black eye; and as his character was well known to both master and scholars, the former felt no hesitation in giving him a wholesome lecture upon the subject of his future conduct. For at least a year before this time, he had gained the nick-name of "Blessed Phelim," and "Bouncing," epithets bestowed on him by an ironical allusion to his patron saint, and his own habits.

"So Blessed Phelim," said the master, "you are coming to school!!! Well, well! I only say that miracles will never cease. Arrah, Phelim, will you tell us candidly—ah—I beg your pardon; I mean, will you tell us the best lie you can coin upon the cause of your coming to imbibe moral and literary knowledge? Silence, boys, till we hear Blessed Phelim's lie."

"You must hear it, masther," said Phelim. "I 'm comin' to larn to read an' write."

"Bravo! by the bones of Prosodius, I expected a lie, but not such a thumper as that. And you 're coming wid a black eye to prove it! A black eye, Phelim, is the blackguard's coat of arms; and to do you justice, you are seldom widout your crest."

For a few days Phelim attended the school, but learned not a letter. The master usually sent him to be taught by the youngest lads, with a hope of being able to excite a proper spirit of pride and emulation in a mind that required some extraordinary impulse. One day he called him up to ascertain what progress he had actually made; the unsuspecting teacher sat at the time upon the wall which separated the barn-floor from the kiln-pot, with his legs dangling at some distance from the ground. It was summer, and the rafters used in drying the grain had been removed. On finding that Blessed Phelim, notwithstanding all the lessons he had received, was still in a state of the purest ignorance, he lost his temper, and brought him over between his knees, that he might give him an occasional cuff for his idleness. The lesson went on, and the master's thumps were thickening about Phelim's ears, much to the worthy youth's displeasure.

"Phelim," said the master, "I 'll invert you as a scarecrow for dunces. I 'll lay you against the wall, with your head down and your heels up, like a forked carrot."

"But how will you manage that?" said Phelim. "What 'ud *I* be doin' in the mane time?"

"I 'll find a way to manage it," said the master.

"To put my head down an' my heels up, is id?" inquired Phelim.

"You 've said it, my worthy," returned his teacher.

"If you don't know the way," replied the pupil, "I 'll show you;" getting his shoulder under the master's leg, and pitching him heels over head into the kiln-pot. He instantly seized his cap, and ran out of the school, highly delighted at his feat; leaving the scholars to render the master whatever assistance was necessary. The poor man was dangerously hurt, for in addition to a broken arm, he received half a dozen severe contusions on the head, and in different parts of the body.

This closed Phelim's education; for no persuasion could ever induce him to enter a school afterwards; nor could any temptation prevail on the neighbouring teachers to admit him as a pupil.

Phelim now shot up rapidly to the stature of a young man; and a graceful slip was he. From the period of fifteen until nineteen, he was industriously employed in idleness. About sixteen he began to look after the girls, and to carry a cudgel. The father in vain attempted to inoculate him with a love of labour; but Phelim would not receive the infection. His life was a pleasanter one. Sometimes, indeed, when he

wanted money to treat the girls at fairs and markets, he would prevail on himself to labour a week or fortnight with some neighbouring farmer; but the moment he had earned as much as he deemed sufficient, the spade was thrown aside. Phelim knew all the fiddlers and pipers in the barony; was master of the ceremonies at every wake and dance that occurred within several miles of him. He was a crack dancer, and never attended a dance without performing a horn-pipe on a door or a table; no man could shuffle, or treble, or cut, or spring, or caper with him. Indeed it was said that he could dance "Moll Roe" upon the end of a five gallon keg, and snuff a mould candle with his heels, yet never lose the time. The father and mother were exceedingly proud of Phelim. The former, when he found him grown up, and associating with young men, began to feel a kind of ambition in being permitted to join Phelim and his companions, and to look upon the society of his own son as a privilege. With the girls Phelim was a beauty without paint. They thought every wake truly a scene of sorrow, if he did not happen to be present. Every dance was doleful without him. Phelim wore his hat on one side, with a knowing but careless air; he carried his cudgel with a good-humoured dashing spirit, precisely in accordance with the character of a man who did not care *a traneen* whether he drank with you as a friend, or fought with you as a foe. Never were such songs heard as Phelim could sing, nor such a voice as that with which he sang them. His attitudes and action were inimitable. The droop in his eye was a standing wink at the girls; and when he sang his funny songs, with what practised ease he gave the darlings a roguish chuck under the chin! Then his jokes! "Why, faix," as the fair ones often said of him, "before Phelim speaks at all, one laughs at what he says." This was fact. His very appearance at a wake, dance, or drinking match, was hailed by a peal of mirth. This heightened his humour exceedingly; for say what you will, laughter is to wit, what air is to fire—the one dies without the other.

Let no one talk of beauty being on the surface. This is a popular error, and no one but a superficial fellow would defend it. Among ten thousand you could not get a more unfavourable surface than Phelim's. His face resembled the rough side of a cullender, or as he was often told in raillery, "you might grate potatoes on it." The lid of his left eye, as the reader knows, was like the lid of a salt-box, always closed; and when he risked a wink with the right, it certainly gave him the look of a man shutting out the world, and retiring into himself for the purpose of self-examination. No, no; beauty is in the mind; in the soul; otherwise Phelim never could have been such a prodigy of comeliness among the girls. This was the distinction the fair sex drew in his favour. "Phelim," they would say, "is not purty, but he's very comely." "Bad end to the one of him but would stale a pig off a tether, wid his winnin' ways." And so he would too, without much hesitation, for it was not the first time he had stolen his father's.

From nineteen until the close of his minority, Phelim became a distinguished man in fairs and markets. He was, in fact, the hero of the parish; but unfortunately he seldom knew on the morning of the fair-day, the name of the party or faction on whose side he was to fight.

This was merely a matter of priority; for whoever happened to give him the first treat, uniformly secured him. The reason of this pliability on his part was, that Phelim being every person's friend, by his good nature, was nobody's foe, except for the day. He fought for fun and for whisky. When he happened to drub some companion or acquaintance on the opposite side, he was ever ready to express his regret at the circumstance, and abused them heartily for not having treated him first.

Phelim was also a great Ribbonman; and from the time he became initiated into the system, his eyes were wonderfully opened to the oppressions of the country. Sessions, decrees, and warrants, he looked upon as gross abuses; assizes, too, by which so many of his friends were put to some inconvenience, he considered as the result of Protestant Ascendancy —cancers that ought to be cut out of the constitution. Bailiffs, drivers, tithe-proctors, tax-gatherers, policemen, and parsons, he thought were vermin that ought to be compelled to emigrate to a much *warmer* country than Ireland.

There was no such hand in the county as Phelim at an *alibi*. Just give him the outline—a few leading particulars of the fact—and he would work wonders. One would think, indeed, that he had been born for that especial purpose; for as he was never known to utter a syllable of truth but once, when he had a design in not being believed, so there was no risk of a lawyer getting truth out of him. No man was ever afflicted with such convenient maladies as Phelim; even his sprains, tooth-aches, and colics, seemed to have entered into the Whiteboy system. But, indeed, the very diseases in Ireland are seditious. Many a time has a tooth-ache come in to aid Paddy in obstructing the course of justice; and a colic been guilty of misprision of treason. Irish deaths, too, are very disloyal, and frequently at variance with the laws: nor are our births much better; for although more legitimate than those of our English neighbours, yet they are in general more illegal. Phelim, in proving his *alibis*, proved all these positions. On one occasion, "he slep at the prisoner's house, and couldn't close his eye with a thief of a tooth-ache that parsecuted him the whole night;" so that in consequence of having the tooth-ache, it was impossible that the prisoner could leave the house without his knowledge.

Again, the prisoner at the bar could not possibly have shot the deceased, "bekase Mickey slept that very night at Phelim's, an' Phelim, bein' ill o' the colic, never slep at all durin' the whole night; an', by the vartue of his oath, the poor boy couldn't go out o' the house unknownst to him. If he had, Phelim would a seen him, sure."

Again, "Paddy Cummisky's wife tuck ill of a young one, an' Phelim was sent for to bring the midwife; but afore he kem to Paddy's, or hard o' the thing at all, the prisoner, airly in the night, comin' to sit awhile wid Paddy, went for the midwife instead o' Phelim, an' thin they sot up an' had a sup in regard of the 'casion; an' the prisoner never left them at all that night until the next mornin'. An' by the same token, he remimbered Paddy Cummisky barrin' the door, an' shuttin' the windies, bekase it's not lucky to have them open, for fraid that the fairies 'ud throw their *pishthrogues* upon the young one, an' it not christened."

Phelim was certainly an accomplished youth. As an alibist, however, his career was, like that of all alibists, a short one. The fact was, that his face soon became familiar to the court and the lawyers, so that his name and appearance were ultimately rather hazardous to the cause of his friends.

Phelim, on other occasions, when summoned as evidence against his well-wishers or brother Ribbonmen, usually forgot his English, and gave his testimony by an interpreter. Nothing could equal his ignorance and want of common capacity during these trials. His face was as free from every visible trace of meaning as if he had been born an idiot. No block was ever more impenetrable than he.

"What is the noble gintleman sayin'?" he would ask in Irish; and on having that explained, he would inquire, "what is that?" then demand a fresh explanation of the last one, and so on successively, until he was given up in despair.

Sometimes, in cases of a capital nature, Phelim, with the consent of his friends, would come forward and make disclosures, in order to have them put upon their trial and acquitted; lest a real approver, or some one earnestly disposed to prosecute, might appear against them. Now the *alibi* and its usual accompaniments are all of old standing in Ireland; but the master-stroke to which we have alluded is a modern invention. Phelim would bear evidence against them; and whilst the government—for it was mostly in government prosecutions he adventured this—believed they had ample grounds for conviction in his disclosures, it little suspected that the whole matter was a plan to defeat itself. In accordance with his design, he gave such evidence upon the table as rendered conviction hopeless. His great object was to damn his own character as a witness, and to make such blunders, premeditated slips, and admissions, as just left him within an inch of a prosecution for perjury. Having succeeded in acquitting his friends, he was content to withdraw amid a volley of pretended execrations, leaving the Attorney-General, with all his legal knowledge, outwitted and foiled.

All Phelim's accomplishments, however, were nothing when compared to his gallantry. With personal disadvantages which would condemn any other man to old bachelorship, he was nevertheless the whiteheaded boy among the girls. He himself was conscious of this, and made his attacks upon their hearts indiscriminately. If he met an unmarried female only for five minutes, be she old or ugly, young or handsome, he devoted at least four minutes and three-quarters to the tender passion; made love to her with an earnestness that would deceive a saint; backed all his protestations with a superfluity of round oaths; and drew such a picture of her beauty as might suit the Houries of Mahomet's paradise.

Phelim and his father were great associates. No two agreed better. They went to fairs and markets together; got drunk together; and returned home with their arms about each other's neck in the most loving and affectionate manner. Larry, as if Phelim were too modest to speak for himself, seldom met a young girl without laying siege to her for the son. He descanted upon his good qualities, glossed over his defects, and drew deeply upon invention in his behalf. Sheelah, on the other hand,

was an eloquent advocate for him. She had her eye upon half a dozen of the village girls, to every one of whom she found something to say in Phelim's favour.

But it is time the *action* of our story should commence. When Phelim had reached his twenty-fifth year, the father thought it was high time for him to marry. The good man had, of course, his own motives for this. In the first place, Phelim, with all his gallantry and cleverness, had never contributed a shilling, either towards his own support or that of the family. In the second place, he was never likely to do so. In the third place, the father found him a bad companion; for, in good truth, he had corrupted the good man's morals so evidently, that his character was now little better than that of his son. In the fourth place, he never thought of Phelim, that he did not see a gallows in the distance; and matrimony, he thought, might save him from hanging, as one poison neutralises another. In the fifth place, the half-acre was but a shabby patch to meet the exigencies of the family, since Phelim grew up. "Bouncing Phelim," as he was called for more reasons than one, had the gift of good digestion, along with his other accomplishments; and with such energy was it exercised, that the "half-acre" was frequently in hazard of leaving the family altogether. The father, therefore, felt quite willing, if Phelim married, to leave him the inheritance, and seek a new settlement for himself. Or, if Phelim preferred leaving him, he agreed to give him one half of it, together with an equal division of all his earthly goods; to wit—two goats, of which Phelim was to get one; six hens and a cock, of which Phelim was to get three hens, and the chance of a toss up for the cock; four stools, of which Phelim was to get two; two pots—a large one and a small one—the former to go with Phelim; three horn spoons, of which Phelim was to get one, and the chance of a toss-up for the third. Phelim was to bring his own bed, provided he did not prefer getting a bottle of fresh straw as a connubial luxury. The blanket was a tender subject; for, having been fourteen years in employment, it entangled the father and Phelim, touching the prudence of the latter claiming it all. The son was at length compelled to give it up, at least in the character of an appendage to his marriage property. He feared that the wife, should he not be able to replace it by a new one, or should she herself not be able to bring him one, as part of her dowry, would find the honey-moon rather lively. Phelim's bedstead admitted of no dispute, the floor of the cabin having served him in that capacity ever since he began to sleep in a separate bed. His pillow was his small-clothes, and his quilt his own coat, under which he slept snugly enough.

The father having proposed, and the son acceded to these arrangements, the next thing to be done was to pitch upon a proper girl as his wife. This being a more important matter, was thus discussed by the father and son, one evening, at their own fire-side, in the presence of Sheelah.

"Now, Phelim," said the father, "look about you, an' tell us what girl in the neighbourhood you'd like to be married to."

"Why," replied Phelim, "I'll lave that to you; jist point out the girl you 'd *like* for your daughther-in-law, an' be she rich, poor, ould, or ugly, *I'll* delude her. That 's the chat."

"Ah, Phelim, if you could put your comedher an Gracey Dalton, you'd be a made boy. She has the full of a rabbit-skin o' guineas."

"A made boy! Faith, they say I'm that as it is, you know. But would you *wish* me to put my comedher on Gracey Dalton? Spake out."

"To be sure I would."

"Ay," observed the mother, "or what 'ud you think of Miss Pattherson? That 'ud be the girl. She has a fine farm, an' five hundhre pounds. She's a Protestant, but Phelim could make a Christian of her."

"To be sure I could," said Phelim, "have her thumpin' her breast, and countin' her *Padareens* in no time. Would you wish me to have *her*, mudher?"

"Throth an' I would, avick."

"That 'ud never do," observed the father. "Sure you don't think she'd ever think of the likes o' Phelim?"

"Don't make a goose of yourself, ould man," observed Phelim. "Do you think if I set about it, that I'd not manufacture her senses as asy as I'd peel a piatee?"

"Well, well," replied the father, "in the name o' Goodness make up to her. Faith it 'ud be something to have a jauntin' car in the family!"

"Ay, but what the sorra will I do for a suit o' clo'es?" observed Phelim. "I could never go near her in these breeches. My elbows, too, are out o' this ould coat, bad luck to it! An' as for a waistcoat, why, I dunna but it's a sin to call what I'm wearin' a waistcoat at all. Thin agin—why, blood alive sure I can't go to her barefooted, an' I dunna but it 'ud be dacenter to do that same, than to step out in sich excuses for brogues as these. An' in regard o' the stockins', why, I've pulled them down, sthrivin' to look dacent, till one 'ud think the balls o' my legs is at my heels."

"The sorra word's in that but thruth, any how," observed the father; "but what's to be done? For *we* have no way of gettin' them."

"Faith, I don't know that," said Phelim. "What if we 'd borry? I could get the loan of a pair of breeches from Dudley Dwire, an' a coat from Sam Appleton. We might thry Billy Brady for a waistcoat, an' a pair o' stockings. Barny Buckram-back, the pinsioner, 'ud lend me his pumps; an' we want nothing now but a hat."

"Nothin' undher a Caroline 'ud do, goin' there," observed the father.

"I think Father O'Hara 'ud oblage me wid the loan o' one for a day or two;" said Phelim; "he has two or three o' them, all as good as ever."

"But, Phelim," said the father, "before we go to all this trouble, are you sure you *could* put your comedher on Miss Pattherson?"

"None o' your nonsense," said Phelim, "don't you know I could? I hate a man to be puttin' questions to me, when he knows them himself. It's a fashion *you* have got, an' you ought to dhrop it."

"Well thin," said the father, "let us set about it to-morrow. If we can borry the clo'es, thry your luck."

Phelim and the father, the next morning, set out each in a different direction, to see how far they could succeed on the borrowing system. The father was to make a descent on Dudley Dwire for the breeches, and appeal to the generosity of Sam Appleton for the coat. Phelim himself

was to lay his case before the priest, and to assail Buckram-back, the pensioner, on his way home, for the brogues.

When Phelim arrived at the priest's house, he found none of the family up but the housekeeper. After bidding her good morrow, and being desired to sit down, he entered into conversation with the good woman, who felt anxious to know the scandal of the whole parish.

"Aren't you a son of Larry Toole's, young man?"

"I am, indeed, Mrs. Doran. I'm Phelim O'Toole, my mother says."

"I hope you're comin' to spake to the priest about your duty."

"Why, then, be gorra, I'm glad you axed me, so I am—for only you seen the pinance in my face, you'd never suppose sich a thing. I want to make my confishion to him, wid the help o' Goodness."

"Is there any news goin', Phelim?"

"Divil a much, barrin' what you hard yourself, I suppose, about Frank Fogarty, that went mad yesterday, for risin' the meal on the poor, an' ate the ears off himself afore anybody could see him.

"*Vick na hoiah*, Phelim; do you tell me so?"

"Why man o' Moses, is it possible you did not hear it, ma'am?"

"Oh, worra, man alive, not a syllable! Ate the ears off of himself! Phelim, acushla, see what it is to be hard an the poor!"

"Oh, he was ever an' always the biggest nager livin', ma'am. Ay, an' when he was tied up, till a blessed priest 'ud be brought to *malivogue* the divil out of him, he got a scythe an' cut his own two hands off."

"No thin, Phelim!"

"Faitha, ma'am, sure enough. I suppose, ma'am, you hard about Biddy Duignan?"

"Who is she, Phelim?"

"Why, the misfortunate crathur's a daughter of her father's, ould Mick Duignan, of Tavenimore."

"An' what about her, Phelim? What happened her?"

"Faix, ma'am, a bit of a mistake she met wid; but, anyhow, ould Harry Connolly's to stand in the chapel nine Sundays, an' to make three Stations to Lough Dergh for it. Bedad, they say it's as purty a crathur as you'd see in a day's thravellin'."

"Harry Connolly! Why, I know Harry, but I never heard of Biddy Duignan, or her father at all. Harry Connolly! Is it a man that's bent over his staff for the last twenty years! Hut, tut, Phelim, don't say sich a thing."

"Why, ma'am, sure he takes wid it himself; he doesn't deny it at all, the ould sinner."

"Oh, that I mayn't sin, Phelim, if one knows who to thrust in this world, so they don't. Why the desateful ould—hut, Phelim, I can't give into it."

"Faix, ma'am, no wondher; but sure when he confesses it himself! Bedad, Mrs. Doran, I never seen you look so well. Upon my sowl, you'd take the shine out o' the youngest o' thim!"

"Is it me, Phelim? Why you're beside yourself."

"Beside myself, am I? Faith, an' if I am, what I said's thruth, any how. I'd give more nor I'll name, to have so red a pair of cheeks as you have. Sowl, they're thumpers."

"Ha, ha, ha! Oh, that I mayn't sin, but that's a good joke! An ould woman near sixty!"

"Now, Mrs. Doran, that's nonsense, an' nothing else. Near sixty! Oh, by my purty, that's runnin' away wid the story entirely—No, nor thirty. Faith I know them that's not more nor five or six-an'-twenty, that 'ud be glad to borry the loan of your face for a while. Divil a word o' lie in that."

"No, no, Phelim, aroon, I seen the day; but that's past. I remimber when the people *did* say I was worth lookin' at. Won't you sit near the fire? You're in the dhraft there."

"Thank you kindly, ma'am; faith, you have the name far an' near, for bein' the civilest woman alive this day. But, upon my sowl, if you wor ten times as civil, an' say that you're not aquil to any young girl in the parish, I'd dispute it wid you; an' say it was nothin' else than a bounce."

"Arrah, Phelim, darlin, how can you palaver me that way? I hope your dacent father's well, Phelim, an' your honest mother."

"Divil a fear o' them. Now, I'd hould nine to one that the purtiest o' them hasn't a sweeter mout' than you have. By dad you have a pair o' lips, God bless them that—well, well—"

Phelim here ogled her with looks particularly wistful.

"Phelim, you're losin' the little senses you had."

"Faix, an' it's you that's taken them out o' me, then. A purty woman always makes a fool o' me. Divil a word o' lie in it. Faix, Mrs. Doran, ma'am, you have a chin o' your own! Well, well! Oh, be Gorra, I wish I hadn't come out this mornin' any how!"

"Arrah, why, Phelim? In throth it's you that's the quare Phelim!"

"Why, ma'am—Oh bedad it's a folly to talk. I can't go widout tastin' them. Sich a pair o' timptations as your lips, barrin' your eyes, I didn't see this many a day."

"Tastin' what, you mad crathur?"

"Why I'll show you what I'd like to be afther tastin'. Oh! bedad, I'll have no refusin'; a purty woman always makes a foo——"

"Keep away, Phelim; keep off—bad end to you; what do you mane? Don't you see Fool Art lyin' in the corner there undher the sacks? I don't think he's asleep."

"Fool Art! why, the misfortunate idiot, what about him? Sure he hasn't sinse to know the right hand from the left. Bedad, ma'am the thruth is, that a purty woman always makes a——"

"Throth an' you wont," said she, struggling.

"Throth an' I will, thin, taste the same lips, or we'll see who's strongest!"

A good-humoured struggle took place between the housekeeper and Phelim, who found her, in point of personal strength, very near a match for him. She laughed heartily, but Phelim attempted to salute her with a face of mock gravity as nearly resembling that of a serious man as he could assume. In the mean time, chairs were overturned, and wooden dishes trundled about; a crash was heard here, and another there. Phelim

drove her to the hob, and from the hob they bounced into the fire, the embers and ashes of which were kicked up into a cloud about them.

"Phelim, spare your strinth," said the funny housekeeper, "it won't do. Be asy now, or I 'll get angry. The priest, too, will hear the noise, and so will Fool Art."

"To the divil wid Fool Art, an' the priest, too," said Phelim, "who cares a buckey about the priest when a purty woman like you is consarn——"

"What 's this?" said the priest, stepping down from the parlour—"what 's the matter? Oh, ho, upon my word, Mrs. Doran! Very good, indeed! Under my own roof, too! An' pray, ma'am, who is the gallant? Turn round, young man. Yes, I see! Why, better and better! Bouncing Phelim O'Toole, that never spoke truth! I think, Mr. O'Toole, that when you come a courting, you ought to consider it worth while to appear somewhat more smooth in your habiliments. I simply venture to give that as my opinion."

"Why, sure enough," replied Phelim, without a moment's hesitation; "your Reverence has *found us out*."

"*Found you out!* Why, is *that* the tone you speak in?"

"Faith, Sir, thruth 's best. I wanted her to tell it to you long ago, but she wouldn't. Howsomever, it 's still time enough.—Hem! The thruth, Sir, is, that Mrs. Doran an' I is goin' to get the words said as soon as we can; so, Sir, wid the help o' Goodness, I came to see if your Reverence 'ud call us next Sunday wid a blessin'."

Mrs. Doran had, for at least a dozen round years before this, been in a state of hopelessness upon the subject of matrimony; nothing in the shape of a proposal having in the course of that period come in her way. Now we have Addison's authority for affirming, that an old woman who permits the thoughts of love to get into her head, becomes a very odd kind of animal. Mrs. Doran, to do her justice, had not thought of it for nearly three lustres, for this reason, that she had so far overcome her vanity as to deem it possible that a proposal could be ever made to her. It is difficult, however, to know what a day may bring forth. Here was an offer, dropping like a ripe plum into her mouth. She turned the matter over in her mind with a quickness equal to that of Phelim himself. One leading thought struck her forcibly: if she refused to close with this offer, she would never get another.

"Is it come to this, Mrs. Doran?" inquired the priest.

"Oh, bedad, Sir, she knows it is," replied Phelim, giving her a wink with the safe eye.

Now, Mrs. Doran began to have her suspicions. The wink she considered as decidedly ominous. Phelim, she concluded with all the sagacity of a woman thinking upon *that* subject, had winked at her to assent only for the purpose of getting themselves out of the scrape *for the present*. She feared that Phelim would be apt to break off the match, and take some opportunity, before Sunday should arrive, of preventing the priest from calling them. Her decision, however, was soon made. She resolved, if possible, to pin down Phelim to his own proposal.

"Is this true, Mrs. Doran?" inquired the priest, a second time.

Mrs. Doran could not, with any regard to the delicacy of her sex, give an assent without proper emotion. She accordingly applied her apron to her eyes, and shed a few natural tears in reply to the affecting query of the pastor.

Phelim, in the mean time, began to feel mystified. Whether Mrs. Doran's tears were a proof that she was disposed to take the matter seriously, or whether they were tears of shame and vexation for having been caught in the character of a romping old hoyden, he could not then exactly decide. He had, however, awful misgivings upon the subject.

"Then," said the priest, "it is to be understood that I'm to call you both on Sunday."

"There's no use in keepin' it back from you," replied Mrs. Doran. "I know it's foolish of me; but we have all our failins, and to be fond of Phelim there, is mine. Your Reverence *is* to call us next Sunday, as Phelim tould you. I am sure I can't tell you how he deluded me at all, the desaver o' the world!"

Phelim's face during this acknowledgment was, like Goldsmith's Haunch of Venison, "a subject for painters to study." His eyes projected like a hare's, until nothing could be seen but the balls. Even the drooping lid raised itself up, as if it were never to droop again.

"Well," said the priest, "I shall certainly not use a single argument to prevent you. Your choice, I must say, does you credit, particularly when it is remembered that you have come at least to years of discretion. Indeed, many persons might affirm that you have gone beyond them; but I say nothing. In the mean time your wishes must be complied with. I will certainly call Phelim O'Toole and Bridget Doran on Sunday next; and one thing I know, that we shall have a very merry congregation."

Phelim's eyes turned upon the priest and the old woman alternately, with an air of bewilderment which, had the priest been a man of much observation, might have attracted his attention.

"Oh, murdher alive, Mrs. Doran," said Phelim, "how am I to do for clo'es? Faith, I 'd like to appear *dacent* in the thing, any how."

"True," said the priest. "Have you made no provision for smoothing the externals of your admirer? Is he to appear in this trim?"

"Bedad, Sir," said Phelim, "we never thought o' that. All the world knows, your Reverence, that I might carry my purse in my eye, an' never feel a mote in it. But the thruth is, Sir, she was so lively on the subject—in a kind of a pleasant, coaxin' hurry of her own—an' indeed I was so myself, too. Augh, Mrs. Doran! Be gorra, Sir, she put her comedher an me entirely, so she did. Well, be my sowl, I 'll be the flower of a husband to her anyhow. I hope your Reverence 'ill come to the christ'nin'? But about the clo'es;—bad luck saize the tack I have to put to my back, but what you see an me, if we wor to be married to-morrow."

"Well, Phelim, aroon," said Mrs. Doran, "his Reverence here has my little pences o' money in his hands, an' the best way is for you to get the price of a suit from him. You must get clo'es, an' good ones, too, Phelim, sooner nor any stop should be put to our marriage."

"Augh, Mrs. Doran," said Phelim, ogling her from the safe eye, with a tender suavity of manner that did honour to his heart; "be gorra, Ma'am, you've played the puck entirely wid me. Faith, I'm gettin' fonder an' fonder of her every minute, your Reverence."

He set his eye, as he uttered this, so sweetly and significantly upon the old housekeeper, that the priest thought it a transgression of decorum in his presence.

"I think," said he, "you had better keep your melting looks to yourself, Phelim. Restrain your gallantry, if you please, at least until I withdraw."

"Why, blood alive! Sir, when people's fond of one another, it's hard to keep the love down. Augh, Mrs. Doran! Faith, you've rendhered my heart like a lump o' tallow."

"Follow me to the parlour," said the priest, "and let me know, Bridget, what sum I am to give this melting gallant of yours."

"I may as well get what'll do the weddin' at wanst," observed Phelim. It'll save throuble, in the first place; an' sackinly, it'll save time; for plase Goodness, I'll have everything ready for houldin' the weddin' the Monday afther the last call. By the hole o' my coat, the minute I get the clo'es we'll be spliced, an' thin for the honeymoon!"

"How much money shall I give him?" said the priest.

"Indeed, Sir, I think you ought to know that; I'm ignorant of what 'ud make a dacent weddin'. We don't intend to get marrid undher a hedge; we've frinds on both sides, an', of coorse, we must have them about us, plase Goodness."

"Be gorra, Sir, it's no wondher I'm fond of her, the darlin'? Bad win to you, Mrs. Doran, how did you come over me at all?"

"Bridget," said the priest, "I have asked you a simple question, to which I expect a plain answer. What money am I to give this tallow-hearted swain of yours?"

"Why, your Reverence, whatsomever you think may be enough for full, an' plinty, an' dacency, at the weddin'."

"Not forgetting the *thatch* for me, in the mane time," said Phelim. "Nothin' less will sarve us, plase your Reverence. Maybe, Sir, you'd think of comin' to the weddin' yourself?"

"There are in my hands," observed the priest, "one hundred and twenty-two guineas of your money, Bridget. Here, Phelim, are ten for your wedding suit and wedding expenses. Go to *your* wedding! No! don't suppose for a moment that I countenance this transaction in the slightest degree. I comply with your wishes, because I heartily despise you both; but certainly this foolish old woman most. Give me an acknowledgment for this, Phelim."

"God bless you, Sir!" said Phelim, as if he had paid them a compliment. "In regard o' the acknowledgment, Sir, I acknowledge it wid all my heart; but bad luck to the scrape at all I can write."

"Well, no matter. You admit, Bridget, that I give this money to this blessed youth by your authority and consent."

"Surely, your Reverence; I'll never go back of it."

"Now, Phelim," said the priest, "you have the money; pray get married as soon as possible."

"I 'll give you my oath," said Phelim; "an' be the blessed iron tongs in the grate there, I 'll not lose a day in gettin' myself spliced. Is n't she the tendher-hearted sowl, your Reverence? Augh, Mrs. Doran!"

"Leave my place," said the priest. "I cannot forget the old proverb, that one fool makes many, but an old fool is worse than any. So it is with this old woman."

"Ould woman! Oh, thin I 'm sure I don't desarve this from your Reverence!" exclaimed the housekeeper, wiping her eyes: "if I 'm a little seasoned now, you know I wasn't always so. If ever there was a faithful sarvant, I was that, an' managed your house and place as honestly as I 'll manage my own, plase Goodness."

As they left the parlour, Phelim became the consoler.

"Whisht, you darlin'!" he exclaimed. "Sure you 'll have Bouncin' Phelim to comfort you. But now that he has shut the door, what—hem—I'd take it as a piece o' civility if you 'd open my eyes a little; I mane—hem—was it—is this doin' *him*, or how? Are you—hem—do you *undherstand* me, Mrs. Doran?"

"What is it you want to know, Phelim? I think everything is very plain."

"Oh, the divil a plainer, I suppose. But in the mane time, might one axe, out o' mere curosity, if you 're *in airnest?*"

"In airnest! Arrah, what did I give you my money for, Phelim? Well, now that everything is settled, God forgive you if you make a bad husband to me."

"A bad *what?*"

"I say, God forgive you if you make a bad husband to me. I 'm afeared, Phelim, that I 'll be too foolish about you—that I 'll be too fond of you."

Phelim looked at her in solemn silence, and then replied—"Let us trust in God that you may be enabled to overcome the weakness. Pray to him to avoid all folly, an' above everything, to give you a dacent stock of discration, for it 's a mighty fine thing for a woman of your yea——hem a mighty fine thing it is, indeed, for a sasoned woman, as you say you are."

"When will the weddin' take place, Phelim?"

"The *what?*" said Phelim, opening his brisk eye with a fresh stare of dismay.

"Why, the weddin', acushla. When will it take place? I think the Monday afther the last call 'ud be the best time. We wouldn't lose a day thin. Throth, I long to hear my last call over, Phelim, jewel."

Phelim gave her another look.

"The last call! Thin, by the vestment, you don't long half as much for your *last* call as I do."

"Arrah, Phelim, did you take the—the—what you wor wantin' awhile agone? Throth, myself disremimbers."

"Ay, a round dozen o' them. How can you forget it?"

The idiot in the corner here gave a loud snore, but composed himself to sleep, as if insensible to all that passed.

"Throth, an' I do forget it. Now, Phelim, you 'll not go till you take a cup o' tay wid myself. Throth, I do forget it, Phelim darlin', jewel."

Phelim's face now assumed a very queer expression. He twisted his features into all possible directions; brought his mouth first round to one ear and then to the other; put his hand, as if in great pain, on the pit of his stomach; lifted one knee up till it almost touched his chin, then let it down, and instantly brought up the other in a similar manner.

"Phelim, darlin', what ails you?" inquired the tender old nymph. "Wurrah, man alive, aren't you well?"

"Oh, be the vestment," said Phelim, "what's this at all? Murdher sheery, what'll I do! Oh, I'm very bad! At death's door, so I am! Be gorra, Mrs. Doran, I must be off."

"Wurrah, Phelim dear, won't you stop till we settle everything?"

"Oh, pursuin' to the ha'p'orth I can settle till I recover o' this murdherin' cholic! All's asthray wid me in the inside. I'll see you—I'll see you—*Hanim an dioul!* what's this?—I must be off like a shot—oh, murdher sheery!—but—but—I'll see you to-morrow. In the mane time, I'm—I'm—for ever oblaged to you for—for—lendin' me the—loan of—oh, by the vestments, I'm a gone man!—for lendin' me the *loan* of the ten guineas—Oh, I'm gone!"

Phelim disappeared on uttering these words, and his strides on passing out of the house were certainly more rapid and vigorous than those of a man labouring under pain. In fact, he never looked behind him until one half the distance between the priest's house and his father's cabin had been fairly traversed.

Some misgivings occurred to the old housekeeper, but her vanity, having been revived by Phelim's blarney, would not permit her to listen to them. She had, besides, other motives to fortify her faith in his attachment. First, there was her money, a much larger sum than ever Phelim could expect with any *other* woman, young or old; again, they were to be called on the following Sunday, and she knew that when a marriage affair proceeds so far, obstruction or disappointment is not to be apprehended.

When Phelim reached home, he found the father returned after having borrowed a full suit of clothes for him. Sam Appleton, on hearing from Larry that Bouncing Phelim was about to get a "Great Match," * generously lent him coat, waistcoat, hat, and small-clothes.

When Phelim presented himself at home, he scarcely replied to the queries put to him by his father and mother concerning his interview with the priest. He sat down, rubbed his hands, scratched his head, rose up, and walked to and fro, in a mood of mind so evidently between mirth and chagrin, that his worthy parents knew not whether to be merry or miserable.

"Phelim," said the mother, "did you take anything while you wor away?"

"Did I take anything! is it? Arrah, be asy, ould woman! Did I take anything! Faith you may say that!"

"Let us know, any how, what's the matther wid you?" asked the father.

* When a country girl is said to have a large fortune, the peasantry, when speaking of her in reference to matrimony, say she's a "Great Match."

"Tare-an'-ounze!" exclaimed the son, "what is this for, at all at all? It's too killin' I am, so it is."

"You 're not lookin' at Sam Appleton's clo'es," said the father, "that he lent you the loan of, hat an' all?"

"Do you want to put an affront upon me, ould man? To the divil wid himself an' his clo'es! When I want clo'es I'll buy them wid my own money!"

"Larry," observed the mother, "there 's yourself all over—as proud as a paycock when the sup 's in your head, an' 'ud spake as big widout the sign o' money in your pocket, as if you had the rint of an estate."

"What do you say about the sign o' money?" exclaimed Phelim, with a swagger. "Maybe you 'll call *that* the sign o' money!" he added, producing the ten guineas in gold.

The father and mother looked at it for a considerable time, then at each other, and shook their heads.

"Phelim!" said the father, solemnly.

"Phelim!" said the mother, awfully; and both shook their heads again.

"You wor never over-scrupulous," the father proceeded, "an' you know you have many little things to answer for, in the way of pickin' up what didn't belong to yourself. I think, too, you 're not the same boy you wor afore you tuck to swearin' the alibies."

"Faith, an' I doubt I 'll have to get some one to swear an alibi for myself soon," Phelim replied.

"Why, blessed hour!" said Larry, "didn't I often tell you never to join the boys in anything that might turn out a hangin' matther?"

"If this is not a hangin' matther," said Phelim, "it 's something nearly as bad: it 's a marryin' matther. Sure I deluded another since you seen me last. Divil a word o' lie in it. I was clane fell in love wid this mornin' about seven o'clock."

"But how did you get the money, Phelim?"

"Why from the youthful sprig that fell in love wid me. Sure we 're to be 'called' in the chapel on Sunday next."

"Why thin now, Phelim! An' who is the young crathur? for in throth she must be young to go to give the money beforehand!"

"Murdher!" exclaimed Phelim, "what 's this for! Was ever any one *done* as I am? Who is she! Why she 's—oh, murdher, oh!—she 's no other than—hem—divil a one else than Father O'Hara's housekeeper, ould Biddy Doran!"

The mirth of the old couple was excessive. The father laughed till he fell off his stool, and the mother till the tears ran down her cheeks.

"Death alive, ould man! but you 're very merry," said Phelim. "If you wor my age, an' in such an amplush, you'd laugh on the wrong side o' your mouth. Maybe you 'll turn your tune when you hear that she has a hundhre an' twenty guineas."

"An' you 'll be rich, too," said the father. "The sprig an' you will be rich!—ha, ha, ha!"

"An' the family they 'll have!" said the mother, in convulsions.

"Why, in regard o' that," said Phelim, rather nettled, "if all fails us,

sure we can do as my father an' you did: kiss the Lucky Stone, an' make a Station."

"Phelim, aroon," said the mother, seriously, "put it out o' your head. Sure you wouldn't go to bring me a daughther-in-law oulder nor myself?"

"I'd as soon *go over*," * said Phelim; "or *swing* itself, before I'd marry sich a piece o' desate. Hard feedin' to her! how she did me to my face!"

Phelim then entered into a long-visaged detail of the scene at Father O'Hara's, dwelling bitterly on the alacrity with which the old housekeeper ensnared him in his own mesh.

"However," he concluded, "she'd be a sharp one if she'd *do* me altogether. We're not married yet; an' I've a consate of my own, that *she's* done for the ten guineas, any how!"

A family council was immediately held upon Phelim's matrimonial prospects. On coming close to the speculation of Miss Patterson, it was somehow voted, notwithstanding Phelim's powers of attraction, to be rather a discouraging one. Gracey Dalton was also given up. The matter was now serious, the time short, and Phelim's bounces touching his own fascinations with the sex in general, were considerably abated. It was therefore resolved, that he ought to avail himself of Sam Appleton's clothes, until his own could be made. Sam, he said, would not press him for them immediately, inasmuch as he was under obligations to Phelim's silence upon some midnight excursions that he had made.

"Not," added Phelim, "but I'm as much, an' maybe more, in his power, than he is in mine."

When breakfast was over, Phelim and the father, after having determined to "drink a bottle" that night in the family of an humble young woman, named Donovan, who, they all agreed, would make an excellent wife for him, rested upon their oars until evening. In the mean time, Phelim sauntered about the village, as he was in the habit of doing, whilst the father kept the day as a holiday. We have never told our readers that Phelim was in love, because in fact we know not whether he was or not. Be this as it may, we simply inform them, that in a little shed in the lower end of the village, lived a person with whom Phelim was very intimate, called Foodle Flattery. He was, indeed, a man after Phelim's own heart, and Phelim was a boy after his. He maintained himself by riding country races; by handing, breeding, and feeding cocks; by fishing, poaching, and serving processes; and finally, by his knowledge as a cow-doctor and farrier—into the two last of which he had given Phelim some insight. We say the two last, for in most of the other accomplishments Phelim was fully his equal. Phelim frequently envied him his life. It was an idle, amusing, vagabond kind of existence, just such a one as he felt a relish for. This man had a daughter, rather well-looking; and it so happened, that he and Phelim had frequently spent whole nights out together, no one knew on what employment. Into Flattery's house did Phelim saunter with something like an inclination to lay the events of the day before him, and to ask his

* A familiar term for "Transportation."

advice upon his future prospects. On entering the cabin he was much surprised to find the daughter in a very melancholy mood; a circumstance which puzzled him not a little, as he knew that they lived very harmoniously together. Sally had been very useful to her father; and, if fame did not belie her, was sometimes worthy Foodle's assistant in his nocturnal exploits. She was certainly reputed to be "light handed;" an imputation which caused the young men of her acquaintance to avoid, in their casual conversations with her, any allusion to matrimony.

"Sally, achora," said Phelim, when he saw her in distress, "what's the fun? Where's your father?"

"Oh, Phelim," she replied, bursting into tears, "long runs the fox, but he's cotch at last. My father's in gaol."

Phelim's jaw dropped. "In gaol! *Chorp an diouol*, no!"

"It's thruth, Phelim. Curse upon this Whiteboy business, I wish it never had come into the counthry at all."

"Sally, I must see him; you know I must. But tell me how it happened? Was it at home he was taken?"

"No; he was taken this mornin' in the market. I was wid him sellin' some chickens. What'll you an' Sam Appleton do, Phelim?"

"Uz! Why, what danger is there to aither Sam or me, you darlin'?"

"I'm sure, Phelim, I don't know; but he tould me, that if I was provided for, he'd be firm, an' take chance of his thrial. But, he says, poor man, that it 'ud brake his heart to be thransported, lavin' me behind him wid nobody to take care o' me. He says, too, if anything 'ud make him *stag*, it's fear of the thrial goin' aginst himself; for, as he said to me, what 'ud become of you, Sally, if anything happened me?"

A fresh flood of tears followed this disclosure, and Phelim's face, which was certainly destined to undergo on that day many variations of aspect, became remarkably blank.

"Sally, you insinivator, I'll hould a thousand guineas you'd never guess what brought me here to-day?"

"Arrah, how could I, Phelim? To plan somethin' wid my fadher, maybe."

"No, but to plan somethin' wid yourself, you coaxin jewel you. Now tell me this—Would you marry a certain gay, roguish, well-built young fellow, they call Bouncin' Phelim?"

"Phelim, don't be gettin' an wid your fun now, an' me in affliction. Sure, I know well you wouldn't throw yourself away upon a poor girl like me, that has nothin' but a good pair of hands to live by."

"Be my sowl, an' you live by them. 'Well, but set in case—supposin' —that same Bouncin' Phelim was willin' to make you misthress of the Half Acre, what 'ud you be sayin'?"

"Phelim, if a body thought you worn't jokin' them—ah, the dickens go wid you, Phelim—this is more o' your thricks—but if it was thruth you wor spakin', Phelim?"

"It is thruth," said Phelim; "be the vestment, it's nothin' else. Now, say yes or no; for if it's a thing that it's to be a match, you must go an' tell him that I'll marry you, an' he must be as firm as a rock.

But see, Sally, by thim five crasses it's not bekase your father's *in* I'm marryin' you at all. Sure I'm in love wid you, acushla! Divil a lie in it. Now, yes or no?"

"Well—troth—to be sure—the sorra one, Phelim, but you have quare ways wid you. Now are you downright in airnest?"

"Be the stool I'm sittin on!"

"Well, in the name o' Goodness, I'll go to my father, an' let him know it. Poor man, it'll take the fear out of his heart. Now can he depind on you, Phelim?"

"Why, all I can say is, that we'll get ourselves called on Sunday next. Let himself, sure, send some one to autorise the priest to call us. An' now that all's settled, don't I desarve somethin'? Oh, be gorra, surely."

"Behave, Phelim—oh—oh—Phelim, now—there you've tuck it—och, the curse o' the crows on you, see the way you have my hair down! There now, you broke my comb, too. Troth, you're a wild slip, Phelim. I hope you won't be goin' on this way wid the girls, when you get married."

"Is it me, you coaxer? No, faith, I'll wear a pair of winkers, for fraid o' lookin' at them at all. Oh, be gorra, no, Sally, I'll lave that to the great people. Sure, they say, the divil a differ *they* make at all."

"Go off now, Phelim, till I get ready, an' set out to my father. But, Phelim, never breathe a word about him bein' in gaol. No one knows it but ourselves—that is, none o' the neighbours."

"I'll sing dumb," said Phelim. "Well, *banaght lath, a rogorah!** Tell him the thruth—to be *game*, an' he'll find you an' me sweeled together whin he comes out, plase Goodness."

Phelim was but a few minutes gone, when the old military cap of Fool Art projected from the little bed-room, which a wicker wall, plastered with mud, divided from the other part of the cabin.

"Is he gone?" said Art.

"You may come out, Art," said she, "he's gone."

"Ha!" said Art, triumphantly, "I often tould him, when he vexed me an' pelted me wid snow-balls, that I'd come along sides wid him yet. An' it's not over aither. Fool Art can snore when he's not asleep, an' see wid his eyes shut. Wherroo for Art!"

"But, Art, maybe he intinds to marry the housekeeper afther all?"

"Hi the cholic, the cholic!
An' ho the cholic for Phelim!"

"Then you think he won't, Art?"

"Hi the cholic, the cholic!
An' ho the cholic for Phelim!"

"Now, Art, don't say a word about my father *not* bein' in gaol. He's to be back from my grandfather's in a short time, an' if we manage well, you'll see what you'll get, Art—a brave new shirt, Art."

"Art has the lane for Phelim, but it's not the long one wid no turn in it. Wherroo for Art."

* My blessing be with you, you rogue!

Phelim, on his return home, felt queer; here was a second matrimonial predicament, considerably worse than the first, into which he was hooked decidedly against his will. The worst feature in this case was the danger to be apprehended from Foodle Flattery's disclosures, should he take it into his head to 'peach upon his brother Whiteboys. Indeed, Phelim began to consider it a calamity that he ever entered into their system at all; for, on running over his exploits along with them, he felt that he was liable to be taken up any morning of the week, and lodged in one of his majesty's boarding-houses. The only security he had was the honesty of his confederates; and experience took the liberty of pointing out to him many cases in which those who considered themselves quite secure, upon the same grounds, either dangled or crossed the water. He remembered, too, some prophecies that had been uttered concerning him with reference both to hanging and matrimony. Touching the former it was often said, that "he'd die where the bird flies"—between heaven and earth; on matrimony, that there seldom was a swaggerer among the girls but came to the ground at last.

Now Phelim had a memory of his own, and in turning over his situation, and the prophecies that had been so confidently pronounced concerning him, he felt, as we said, rather queer. He found his father and mother in excellent spirits when he got home. The good man had got a gallon of whiskey on credit; for it had been agreed on not to break the ten golden guineas, until they should have ascertained how the match-making would terminate that night at Donovan's.

"Phelim," said the father, "strip yourself, an' put on Sam's cloe's: you must send him down yours for a day or two; he says it's the least he may have the wearin' o' them, so long as you have his."

"Right enough," said Phelim; "Wid all my heart; I'm ready to make a fair swap wid him any day, for that matther."

"I sent word to the Donovans that we're to go to coort there to night," said Larry; "so that they'll be prepared for us; an' as it would be shabby not to have a friend, I asked Sam Appleton himself. He's to folly us."

"I see," said Phelim, "I see. Well, the best boy in Europe Sam is, for sich a spree. Now, fadher, you must lie like the ould *diouol* to night. Back everything I say, an' there's no fear of us. 'But about what she's to get, you must hould out for that. I'm to despise it, you know. I'll abuse you for spakin' about fortune, but don't budge an inch."

"It's not the first time I've done that for you, Phelim; but in regard o' these ten guineas, why you must put them in your pocket for fraid they'd be wantin' to get off wid' layin' down guinea for guinea. You see, they don't think *we* have a rap; an' if they propose it we'll be up to them."

"Larry," observed Sheelah, "don't make a match except they give that pig they have. Hould out for that by all means."

"Tare-an'-ounze!" exclaimed Phelim, "am I goin' to take the counthry out o' the face? By the vestments, I'm a purty boy! Do you know the fresh news I have for yez?"

"Not ten guineas more, Phelim?" replied the father.

"Maybe you soodhered another ould woman," said the mother.

"Be asy," replied Phelim. "No, but by the five crasses, I deluded a young one since I went out!"

The old couple were once more disposed to be mirthful; but Phelim confirmed his assertion with such a multiplicity of oaths, that they believed him. Nothing, however, could wring the secret of her name out of him. He had reasons for concealing it which he did not wish to divulge. In fact, he could never endure ridicule, and the name of Sally Flattery, as the person whom he had "deluded," would constitute, on his part, a triumph quite as sorry as that which he had achieved in Father O'Hara's. In Ireland no man ever thinks of marrying a female thief—which Sally was strongly suspected to be—except some worthy fellow, who happens to be gifted with the same propensity.

When the proper hour arrived, honest Phelim, after having already made arrangements to be called on the following Sunday, as the intended husband of two females, now proceeded with great coolness to make, if possible, a similar engagement with a third.

There is something, however, to be said for Phelim. His conquest over the housekeeper was considerably out of the common course of love affairs. He had drawn upon his invention, only to bring himself and the old woman out of the ridiculous predicament in which the priest found them. He had, moreover, intended to prevail on her to lend him the hat, in case the priest himself had refused him. He was consequently not prepared for the vigorous manner in which Mrs. Doran fastened upon the subject of matrimony. On suspecting that she was inclined to be serious, he pleaded his want of proper apparel; but here again the liberality of the housekeeper silenced him, whilst, at the same time, it opened an excellent prospect of procuring that which he most required—a decent suit of clothes. This induced him to act a part that he did not feel. He saw the old woman was resolved to outwit him, and he resolved to overreach the old woman.

His mariage with Sally Flattery was to be merely a matter of chance. If he married her at all, he knew it must be in self-defence. He felt that her father had him in his power, and that he was anything but a man to be depended on. He also thought that his being called with her, on the Sunday following, would neutralise his call with the housekeeper; just as positive and negative quantities in algebra cancel each other. But he was quite ignorant that the story of Flattery's imprisonment was merely a plan of the daughter's to induce him to marry her.

With respect to Peggy Donovan, he intended, should he succeed in extricating himself from the meshes which the other two had thrown around him, that she should be the elected one to whom he was anxious to unite himself. As to the confusion produced by being called to three at once, he knew that, however laughable in itself, it would be precisely something like what the parish would expect from *him*. Bouncing Phelim was no common man, and to be called to three on the same Sunday, would be a corroboration of his influence with the sex. It certainly chagrined him not a little that one of them was an old woman, and the other of indifferent morals; but still it exhibited the claim of three women

upon one man, and that satisfied him. His mode of proceeding with Peggy Donovan was regular, and according to the usages of the country. The notice had been given that he and his father would go a courting, and of course they brought the whiskey with them, that being the custom among persons in their circumstances in life. These humble courtships very much resemble the driving of a bargain between two chapmen; for, indeed, the closeness of the demands on the one side, and the reluctance of concession on the other, are almost incredible. Many a time has a match been broken up by a refusal on the one part, to give a slip of a pig, or a pair of blankets, or a year old calf. These are small matters in themselves, but they are of importance to those who, perhaps, have nothing else on earth with which to begin the world.

The house to which Phelim and his father directed themselves was, like their own, of the humblest description. The floor of it was about sixteen feet by twelve; its furniture rude and scanty. To the right of the fire was a bed, the four posts of which ran up to the low roof; it was curtained with straw mats, with the exception of an opening about a foot and a half wide on the side next the fire, through which those who slept in it passed. A little below the foot of the bed were ranged a few shelves of deal, supported by pins of wood driven into the wall. These constituted the dresser. In the lower end of the house stood a potato-bin, made up of stakes driven into the floor, and wrought with strong wicker-work. Tied to another stake beside this bin stood a cow, whose hinder part projected so close to the door, that those who entered the cabin were compelled to push her over out of their way. This, indeed, was effected without much difficulty, for the animal became so habituated to the necessity of moving aside, that it was only necessary to lay the hand upon her. Above the door in the inside, almost touching the roof, was the hen-roost, made also of wicker-work; and opposite the bed, on the other side of the fire, stood a meal chest, its lid on a level with the little pane of glass which served as a window. An old straw chair, a few stools, a couple of pots, some wooden vessels and crockery, completed the furniture of the house. The pig to which Sheelah alluded was not kept within the cabin, that filthy custom being now less common than formerly.

This catalogue of cottage furniture may appear to our English readers very miserable. We beg them to believe, however, that if every cabin in Ireland were equally comfortable, the country would be comparatively happy. Still it is to be remembered, that the *dramatis personæ* of our story are of the humblest class.

When seven o'clock drew nigh, the inmates of this little cabin placed themselves at a clear fire; the father at one side, the mother at the other, and the daughter directly between them, knitting, for this is usually the occupation of a female on such a night. Everything in the house was clean; the floor swept; the ashes removed from the hearth; the parents in their best clothes, and the daughter also in her holiday apparel. She was a plain girl, neither remarkable for beauty, nor otherwise. Her eyes, however, were good, so were her teeth, and an anxious look, produced of course by an occasion so interesting to a female, heightened her

complexion to a blush that became her. The creature had certainly made the most of her little finery. Her face shone like that of a child after a fresh scrubbing with a strong towel; her hair, carefully curled with the hot blade of a knife, had been smoothed with soap until it became lustrous by repeated polishing, and her best red ribbon was tied tightly about it in a smart knot, that stood out on the side of her head with something of a coquettish air. Old Donovan and his wife maintained a conversation upon some indifferent subject, but the daughter evidently paid little attention to what they said. It being near the hour appointed for Phelim's arrival, she sat with an appearance of watchful trepidation, occasionally listening, and starting at every sound that she thought bore any resemblance to a man's voice or footstep.

At length the approach of Phelim and his father was announced by a verse of a popular song, for singing which Phelim was famous :—

"A sailor coorted a farmer's daughther
That lived *contagious* to the Isle of Man.
A long time coortin', an' still discoorsin'
Of things consarnin' the ocean wide;
At linth he saize, 'My own dearest darlint,
Will you consint for to be my bride?"

"An' so she did consint, the darlin', but what the puck would she do else? God save the family! Paddy Donovan, how is your health? Molly, avourneen, I 'm glad to hear that you 're thrivin'. An' Peggy—eh? Ah, be gorra, fadher, here 's somethin' to look at! Give us the hand of you, you bloomer! Och, och! faith you 're the daisey!"

"Phelim," said the father, "will you behave yourself? Have n't you the night before you for your capers? Paddy Donovan, I 'm glad to see you! Molly, give us your right hand, for, in troth, I have a regard for you! Peggy, dear, how are you? But I 'm sure I need n't be axin' when I look at you! In troth, Phelim, she *is* somethin' to throw your eye at."

"Larry Toole, you 're welcome," replied Donovan and his wife, "an' so is your son. Take stools both of you, an' draw near the hearth. Here, Phelim," said the latter, "draw in an' sit beside myself."

"Thank you kindly, Molly," replied Phelim; "but I 'll do no sich thing. Arrah, do you think, now, that I 'd begin to gosther wid an ould woman, while I have the likes o' Peggy, the darlin', beside me? I 'm up to a thrick worth nine of it. No, no; this chest 'll do. Sure, you know, I must help the 'duck of diamonds' here to count her stitches."

"Paddy," said Larry, in a friendly whisper, "put this whisky past for a while, barrin' this bottle that we must taste for good luck. Sam Appleton's to come up afther us, an', I suppose, some o' your own *cleavens* 'll be here afther a while."

"Thrue for you," said Donovan. "Jemmy Burn and Antony Devlin is to come over presently. But, Larry, this is nonsense. One bottle o' whisky was lashins; my Goodness, what 'll we be doin' wid a whole gallon?"

"Dacency or nothin', Paddy: if it was my last I 'd show sperit, an' why not? Who 'd be for the shabby thing?"

"Well, well, Larry, I can't say but you 're right afther all! Maybe I 'd do the same thing myself, for all I 'm spaking' aginst it."

The old people then passed round an introductory glass, after which they chatted away for an hour or so, somewhat like the members of a committee who talk upon indifferent topics until their brethren are all assembled.

Phelim, in the mean time, grappled with the daughter, whose knitting he spoiled by hooking the thread with his finger, jogging her elbow until he ran the needles past each other, and finally unravelling her clew; all which she bore with great good-humour. Sometimes, indeed, she ventured to give him a thwack upon the shoulder, with a laughing frown upon her countenance, in order to correct him for teasing her.

When Jemmy Burn and Antony Devlin arrived, the spirits of the party got up. The whisky was formally produced, but as yet the subject of the courtship, though perfectly understood, was not introduced. Phelim and the father were anxious to await the presence of Sam Appleton, who was considered, by the way, a first-rate hand at match-making.

Phelim, as is the wont, on finding the din of the conversation raised to the proper pitch, stole one of the bottles, and prevailed on Peggy to adjourn with him to the potato-bin. Here they ensconced themselves very snugly; but not, as might be supposed, contrary to the knowledge and consent of the seniors, who winked at each other on seeing Phelim gallantly tow her down with the bottle under his arm. It was only the common usage on such occasions, and not considered any violation whatsoever of decorum. When Phelim's prior engagements are considered, it must be admitted that there was something singularly ludicrous in the humorous look he gave over his shoulder at the company, as he went toward the bin, having the bottom of the whisky-bottle projecting behind his elbow, winking at them in return, by way of a hint to mind their own business and allow him to plead for himself. The bin, however, turned out to be rather an uneasy seat, for as the potatoes lay in a slanting heap against the wall, Phelim and his sweetheart were perpetually sliding down from the top to the bottom. Phelim could be industrious when it suited his pleasure. In a few minutes those who sat about the fire imagined, from the noise at the bin, that the house was about to come about their ears.

"Phelim, you thief," said the father, "what 's all that noise for?"

"*Chrosh orrin!*"* said Molly Donovan, "is that tundher?"

"Devil carry these piatees," exclaimed Phelim, raking them down with both hands and all his might, "if there 's any sitting' at all upon them! I 'm levellin' them to prevint Peggy, the darlin', from slidderin', an' to give us time to be talkin' somethin' lovin' to one another. The curse o' Cromwell an them! One might as well dhrink a glass o' whisky wid his sweetheart, or spake a tinder word to her, on the wings of a windmill as here. There now, they 're as level as you plase, acushla! Sit down, you jewel you, an' give me the eggshell, till we have our sup o' the crathur in comfort. Faith, it was too soon for us to be comin' down in the world!"

* The cross be about us!

Phelim and Peggy having each emptied the egg-shell, which among the poorer Irish is frequently the substitute for a glass, entered into the following sentimental dialogue, which was covered by the loud and entangled conversation of their friends about the fire; Phelim's arm lovingly about her neck, and his head laid down snugly against her cheek.

"Now, Peggy, you darlin' o' the world—bad cess to me but I'm as glad as two tenpennies that I levelled these piatees; there was no sittin' an them. Eh, avourneen?"

"Why, we're comfortable now, any how, Phelim!"

"Faith, you may say that—(a loving squeeze.) Now, Peggy, begin an' tell us all about your bachelors."

"The sarra one ever I had, Phelim."

"Oh, murdher sheery, what a bounce! Bad cess to me, if you can spake a word o' thruth afther that, you common desaver! Worn't you an' Paddy Moran pullin' a coard?"

"No, in throth; it was given out on us, but we never wor, Phelim. Nothin' ever passed betune us but common civility. He thrated my father an' mother wanst to share of half a pint in the Lammas Fair, when I was along wid them; but he never broke discoorse wid me, barrin', as I sed, in civility an' friendship."

"An' do you mane to put it down my throath that you never had a sweetheart at all?"

"The nerra one."

"Oh, you thief! Wid two sich lips o' your own, an' two sich eyes o' your own, an' two sich cheeks o' your own! Oh, by the tarn, that won't pass."

"Well, an' supposin' I had—behave Phelim—supposin' I had, where's the harm? Sure it's well known all the sweethearts you had, an' have yet, I suppose."

"Be gorra, an' that's thruth; an' the more the merrier, you jewel you, till one get's married. I had enough o' them, in my day, but you're the flower o' them all, that I'd like to spend my life wid"—(a squeeze.)

"The sorra one word the men say a body can trust. I warrant you tould that story to every one o' them as well as to me. Stop, Phelim—it's well known that what you say to the colleens is no gospel. You know what they christened you 'Bouncin' Phelim' for."

"Betune you an' me, Peggy, I'll tell you a sacret; I *was* the boy for deludin' them. It's very well known the matches I might a' got; but you see, you little shaver, it was waitin' for yourself I was."

"For me! A purty story, indeed! I'm sure it was! Oh, afther that! Why, Phelim, how can you——Well, well, did any one ever hear the likes?"

"Be the vestments, it's thruth. I had you in my eye these three years, but was waitin' till I'd get together as much money as 'ud set us up in the world dacently. Give me that egg-shell agin. Talkin's dhruthy work. *Shudorth, a rogarah!** an' a pleasant honeymoon to us!"

* This to you, you rogue.

"Wait till we're marrid first, Phelim; thin it'll be time enough to dhrink *that*."

"Come, acushla, it's your turn now; taste the shell, an' you'll see how lovin' it'll make us. Mother's milk's a thrifle to it."

"Well, if I take this, Phelim, I'll not touch another dhrop to-night. In the mane time, here's whatever's best for us! Whoo! Oh, my! but that's strong! I dunna how the people can dhrink so much of it!"

"Faith, nor me; except bekase they have a regard for it, an' that it's worth havin' a regard for, jist like yourself an' me. Upon my faix, Peggy, it bates all, the love an' likin' I have for you, an' ever had these three years past. I tould you about the eyes, mavourneen, an'—an'—about the lips——"

"Phelim—behave—I say—now stop wid you—well—well—but you're the tazin' Phelim!—Throth, the girls may be glad when you're married," exclaimed Peggy, adjusting her polished hair.

"Bad cess to the bit, if ever I got so sweet a one in my life—the soft end of a honeycomb's a fool to it. One thing, Peggy, I can tell you—that I'll love you in great style. Whin we're marrid it's I that'll soodher you up. I won't let the wind blow on you. You must give up workin', too. All I'll ax you to do will be to nurse the childhre; an' that same will keep you busy enough, plase Goodness."

"Upon my faix, Phelim, you're the very sarra, so you are. Will you be asy now? I'll engage when you're married, it'll soon be another story wid you. Maybe you'd care little about us thin!"

"Be the vestments, I'm spakin' pure gospel, so I am. Sure you don't know that to be good husbands *runs* in our family. Every one o' them was as sweet as thracle to their wives. Why, there's that ould cock, my fadher, an', if you'd see how he butthers up the ould woman to this day, it 'ud make your heart warm to any man o' the family."

"Ould an' young was ever an' always the same to you, Phelim. Sure the ouldest woman in the parish, if she happened to be single, could n't miss of your blarney. It's reported you're goin' to be marrid to an ould woman."

"He—hem—ahem!—Bad luck to this cowld I have! it 's stickin' in my throath entirely, so it is!—hem!—to a what?"

"Why, to an ould woman, wid a great deal o' the hard goold!"

Phelim put his hand instinctively to his waistcoat-pocket, in which he carried the housekeeper's money.

"Would you oblage one wid her name?"

"You know ould Molly Kavanagh well enough, Phelim."

Phelim put up an inward ejaculation of thanks.

"To the sarra wid her, an' all sasoned women. God be praised that the night 's fine, any how! Hand me the shell, an' we'll take a *gauliogue* aich, an' afther that we'll begin an' talk over how lovin' an' fond o' one another we'll be."

"You're takin' too much o' the whisky, Phelim. Oh, for Goodness' sake!—oh—b—b—n—now be asy. Faix, I'll go to the fire, an' lave you altogether, so I will, if you don't give over slustherin' me, that way, an' stoppin' my breath."

"Here's all happiness to our two selves, acushla machree! Now thry another *gauliogue*, an' you'll see how deludin' it 'll make you."

"Not a sup, Phelim."

"Arrah, nonsense! Be the vestments, it's as harmless as new milk from the cow. It'll only do you good, alanna. Come now, Peggy, don't be ondacent, an' it our first night's coortin'! Blood alive! don't make little o' my father's son on sich a night, an' us at business like this, any how!"

"Phelim, by the crass, I won't take it; so that ends it. Do you want to make little o' me? It's not much you'd think o' me in your mind, if I'd dhrink it."

"The shell's not half full."

"I wouldn't brake my oath for all the whisky in the kingdom; so don't ax me. It's neither right nor proper of you to force it an me."

"Well, all I say is, that it's makin' little of one Phelim O'Toole, that has n't a thought in his body but what's over head an' ears in love wid you. I must only dhrink it for you myself, thin. Here's all kinds o' good fortune to us! Now, Peggy,—sit closer to me acushla!—Now, Peggy, are you fond o' me at all? Tell thruth, now."

"Fond o' you! Sure you know all the girls is fond of you. Are n't you 'the boy for deludin' them?'—ha, ha, ha!"

"Come, come, you shaver; that won't do. Be sarious. If you knew how my heart's warmin' to you this minute, you'd fall in love wid my shadow. Come, now, out wid it. Are you fond of a sartin boy not far from you, called Bouncin' Phelim?"

"To be sure I am. Are you satisfied now? Phelim! I say,"—

"Faith, it won't pass, avourneen. That's not the voice for it. Don't you hear *me*, how tendher I spake wid my mouth brathin' into your ear, acushla machree? Now turn about, like a purty entisin' girl, as you are, an' put *your sweet bill* to my ear the same way, an' whisper what you know into it? That's a darlin'! Will you, achora?"

"An' maybe all this time you're promised to another?"

"Be the vestments, I'm not promised to one. Now! Saize the one!"

"You'll say that, any how!"

"Do you see my hands acrass? Be thim five crasses, I'm not promised to a girl livin', so I'm not, nor wouldn't, bekase I had you in my eye. Now will you tell me what I'm wantin' you? The grace o' Heaven light down an you, an' be a good, coaxin' darlin' for wanst! Be this an' be that, if ever you heerd or seen sich doins an' times as we'll have when we're marrid. Now the weeny whispher, *a colleen dhas!*"

"It's time enough yet to let you know my mind, Phelim. If you behave yourself an' be——Why thin is it at the bottle agin you are? Now dont dhrink so much, Phelim, or it'll get into your head. I was sayin' that if you behave yourself, an' be a good boy, I may tell you somethin' soon."

"Somethin' soon! Live horse, an' you'll get grass! Peggy, if that's the way wid you, the love's all on my side, I see clearly. Are you willin' to marry me, any how?"

"I'm willin' to do whatsomever my father an' mother wishes."

"*I 'm* for havin' the weddin' off-hand; an' of coorse, if we agree to-night, I think our best plan is to have ourselves called on Sunday. An' I 'll tell you what, avourneen,—be the holy vestments, if I was to be 'called' to fifty on the same Sunday, you 're the darlin' I 'd marry."

"Phelim, it 's time for us to go up to the fire; we 're long enough here. I thought you had only three words to say to me."

"Why, if you 're tired o' me, Peggy, I don't want you to stop. I wouldn't force myself on the best girl that ever stepped."

"Sure you have tould me all you want to say, an' there 's no use in us stayin' here. You know, Phelim, there 's not a girl in the parish 'ud believe a word that 'ud come out o' your lips. Sure there 's none o' them but you coorted one time or other. If you could get betther, Phelim, I dunna whether you 'd be here to-night at all or not."

"Answer me this, Peggy. What do you think your father 'ud be willin' to give you? Not that I care a *crona baun* about it, for I 'd marry you wid an inch of candle."

"You know my father 's but a poor man, Phelim, an' can give little or nothin'. Them that won't marry me as I am, needn't come here to look for a fortune."

"I know that, Peggy, an' be the same token, I want no fortune at all wid you but yourself, darlin'. In the mane time, to show you that I *could* get a fortune—*Dher a Lorha Heena*, I could have a wife wid a hundhre an' twenty guineas!"

Peggy received this intelligence much in the same manner as Larry and Sheelah had received it. Her mirth was absolutely boisterous for at least ten minutes. Indeed, so loud had it been, that Larry and her father could not help asking:—

"Arrah, what 's the fun, Peggy, achora?"

"Oh, nothin'," she replied, "but one o' Phelim's bounces."

"Now," said Phelim, "you won't believe me! Be all the books—"

Peggy's mirth prevented his oaths from being heard. In vain he declared, protested, and swore. On this occasion, he was compelled to experience the fate peculiar to all liars. Even truth, from his lips, was looked upon as falsehood.

Phelim, on finding that he could neither extort from Peggy an acknowledgment of love, nor make himself credible upon the subject of the large fortune, saw that he had nothing for it now, in order to produce an impression, but the pathetic.

"Well," said he, "you may lave me, Peggy achora, if you like; but out o' this *I 'll* not budge, wid a blessing, till I cry my skinful, so I won't. Saize the toe I 'll move, now, till I 'm sick wid cryin'! Oh, murdher alive, this night! Isn't it a poor case entirely, that the girl I 'd suffer myself to be turned inside out for, won't say that she cares about a hair o' my head! Oh, thin, but I 'm the misfortunate blackguard all out! Och, oh! Peggy, achora, you 'll break my heart! Hand me that shell, acushla—for I 'm in the height of affliction!"

Peggy could neither withhold it, nor reply to him. Her mirth was even more intense now than before; nor, if all were known, was Phelim less affected with secret laughter than Peggy.

"Is it makin' fun o' me you are, you thief, eh?—Is it laughin' at my grief you are?" exclaimed Phelim. "Be the tarn' o' war, I 'll punish you for that."

Peggy attempted to escape, but Phelim succeeded, ere she went, in taking a salutation or two, after which both joined those who sat at the fire, and in a few minutes Sam Appleton entered.

Much serious conversation had already passed in reference to the courtship, which was finally entered into and debated, *pro* and *con*.

"Now, Paddy Donovan, that we 're all together, let me tell you one thing, there 's not a betther nathur'd boy, nor a stouther, claner young fellow in the parish, than *my* Phelim. He 'll make your daughther as good a husband as ever broke bread!"

"I 'm not sayin' aginst that, Larry. He *is* a good nathur'd boy: but I tell you, Larry Toole, that *my* daughther 's his fill of a wife any day. An' I 'll put this to the back o' that—she 's a hard-workin' girl, that ates no idle bread."

"Very right," said Sam Appleton. "Phelim 's a hairo, an' she 's a beauty. Dang me, but they wor made for one another. Phelim, abouchal, why don't you—oh, I see you are. Why, I was goin' to bid you make up to her."

"Give no gosther, Sam," replied Phelim, "but sind round the bottle, an' don't forget to let it come this way. I hardly tasted a dhrop to-night."

"Oh, Phelim!" exclaimed Peggy.

"Whisht!" said Phelim, "there 's no use in lettin' the ould fellows be committin' sin. Why they 're *hearty* * as it is, the sinners."

"Come, nabours," said Burn, "I 'm the boy that 's for close work. How does the match stand? You 're both my friends, an' may this be poison to me, but I 'll spake like an honest man, for the one as well as for the other."

"Well, then," said Donovan, "how is Phelim to support my daughther, Larry? Sure that 's a fair questin', any way."

"Why, Paddy," replied Larry, "when Phelim gets her, he 'll have a patch of his own, as well as another. There 's that 'half acre,' and a betther piece o' land isn't in Europe!"

"Well, but what plenishin' are they to have, Larry? A bare half acre 's but a poor look up."

"I 'd as soon you 'd not make little of it, in the mane time," replied Larry, rather warmly. "As good a couple as ever they wor, lived on that half acre; along wid what they earned by hard work otherwise."

"I 'm not disparagin' it, Larry; I 'd be long sorry; but about the furniture? What are they to begin the world wid?"

"Hut," said Devlin, "go to the sarra wid yez!—What 'ud they want, no more nor other young people like them, to begin the world wid? Are you goin' to make English or Scotch of them, that never marries till they 're able to buy a farm an' stock it, the nagers. By the staff in my hand, an Irishman 'ud lash a dozen 'o them, wid all their prudence!

* Tipsy.

Hasn't Phelim an' Peggy health and hands, what most new-married couples in Ireland begins the world wid? Sure they're not worse nor a thousand others?"

"Success, Antony," said Phelim; "here's your health for that!"

"God be thanked, they have health an' hands," said Donovan. "Still, Antony, I'd like that they'd have somethin' more."

"Well, then, Paddy, spake up for yourself," observed Larry. "What will you put to the fore for the colleen? Don't take both flesh an' bone!"

"I'll not spake up, till I know all that Phelim's to expect," said Donovan. "I don't think he has a right to be axin' anything wid sich a girl as *my* Peggy."

"Hut, tut, Paddy! She's a good colleen enough; but do you think she's above any one that carries the name of O'Toole upon him? Still it's but raisonable for you to wish the girl well settled. *My* Phelim will have one half o' my wordly goods, at all evints."

"Name them, Larry, if you plase."

"Why, he'll have one o' the goats; the grey one, for she's the best o' the two, in throth. He'll have two stools; three hens, an' a toss up for the cock. The biggest o' the two pots; two good crocks; three good wooden trenchers, an—hem—he'll have his own—I say, Paddy, are you listenin' to me?—Phelim, do you hear what I'm givin' you, *a veehonee?—his own bed!* An' there's all I can or will do for him. Now do you spake up for Peggy."

"I'm to have my own bedstead too," said Phelim, "an' bad cess to the stouter one in Europe. "It's as good this minute as it was eighteen years agone."

"Paddy Donovan, spake up," said Larry.

"Spake up!" said Paddy, contemptuously. "Is it for three crowns' worth, I'd spake up? The bedstead, Phelim! *Bedhu husth*,* man!"

"Put round the bottle," said Phelim, "we're dhry here."

"Thrue enough, Phelim," said the father. "Paddy, here's towarst you an' yours—nabours—all your healths—young couple! Paddy, give us your hand, man alive! Sure, whether we agree or not, this won't put between us."

"Throth it won't, Larry—an' I'm thankful to you. Your health, Larry, an' all your healths! Phelim an' Peggy, success to yez, whether or not! An' now, in regard o' your civility, I *will* spake up. My proposal is this:—I'll put down guinea for guinea wid you."

Now we must observe, by the way, that this was said under the firm conviction that neither Phelim nor the father had a guinea in their possession.

"I'll do that same, Paddy," said Larry; "but I'll lave it to the present company, if you're not bound to put down the *first* guinea. Nabours, am n't I right!"

"You are right," Larry, said Burn, "it's but fair that Paddy should put down the first."

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* Hold your tongue.

N Wrightson Des^d

"Here goes the Goold my worthy."—

Phelim C Toole, p. 233

"Molly, achora," said Donovan to the wife, who by the way, was engaged in preparing the little feast usual on such occasions—"Molly, achora, give me that ould glove you have in your pocket."

She immediately handed him an old shammy glove, tied up into a hard knot, which he felt some difficulty in unloosing.

"Come, Larry," said he, laying down a guinea-note, "cover that like a man."

"Phelim carries my purse," observed the father; but he had scarcely spoken when the laughter of the company rang loudly through the house. The triumph of Donovan appeared to be complete, for he thought the father's allusion to Phelim tantamount to an evasion.

"Phelim! Phelim carries it! Faix, an' I doubt he finds it a light burdyeen."

Phelim approached in all his glory.

"What am I to do?" he inquired, with a swagger.

"You're to cover that guinea note wid a guinea, if you can," said Donovan.

"Whether 'ud you prefar goold or notes," said Phelim, looking pompously about him; "that's the talk."

This was received with another merry peal of laughter.

"Oh, goold—goold by all manes!" replied Donovan.

"Here goes the goold, my worthy," said Phelim, laying down his guinea with a firm slap upon the table.

Old Donovan seized it, examined it, then sent it round, to satisfy himself that it was a *bonâ fide* guinea.

On finding that it was good, he became blank a little; his laugh lost its strength, much of his jollity was instantly neutralised, and his face got at least two inches longer. Larry now had the laugh against him, and the company heartily joined in it.

"Come, Paddy," said Larry, "go an!—ha, ha, ha!"

Paddy fished for half a minute through the glove; and, after what was apparently a hard chace, brought up another guinea, which he laid down.

"Come, Phelim!" said he, and his eye brightened again with a hope that Phelim would fail.

"Good agin!" said Phelim, thundering down another, which was instantly subjected to a similar scrutiny.

"You 'll find it good," said Larry. "I wish we had a sackful o' them. Go an, Paddy. Go an, man, who 's afeard?"

"Sowl, I 'm done," said Donovan, throwing down the purse with a hearty laugh—"give me your hand, Larry. Be the goold afore us, I thought to do you. Sure these two guineas is for my rint, an' we musn't let them come atween us at all."

"Now," said Larry, "to let you see that my son 's not widout something to begin the world wid—Phelim, shill out the rest o' the yallow boys."

"Faix, you ought to dhrink the ould woman's health for this," said Phelim. "Poor ould crathur, many a long day she was savin' up these for me. It 's my mother I 'm speakin' about."

"An' we will, too," said the father; "here's *Sheelah's* health, neigh-

bours! The best poor man's wife that ever *threwn* a gown over her shouldhers."

This was drank with all the honours, and the negotiation proceeded.

"Now," said Appleton, "what's to be done? Paddy, say what you 'll do for the girl."

"Money 's all talk," said Donovan; "I 'll give the girl the two-year ould heifer—an' that 's worth double what his father has promised Phelim; I 'll give her a stone o' flax, a dacent suit o' clo'es, my blessin'—an' there 's her fortune."

"Has she neither bed nor beddin'?" inquired Larry.

"Why, don't you say that Phelim's to have his own bed?" observed Donovan. "Sure one bed 'ill be plinty for them."

"I don't care a damn about fortune," said Phelim, for the first time taking a part in the bargain—"so long as I get the darlin' herself. But I think there 'ud be no harm in havin' a spare pair o' blankets—an', for that matther, a bedstead, too—in case a friend came to see a body."

"I don't much mind givin' you a *brother* to the bedstead you have, Phelim," replied Donovan, winking at the company, for he was perfectly aware of the nature of Phelim's bedstead.

"I 'll tell you what you must do," said Larry, "otherwise I 'll not stand it. Give the colleen a chaff bed, blankets an' all other parts complate, along wid that slip of a pig. If you don't do this, Paddy Donovan, why we 'll finish the whisky an' part friends—but it 's no match."

"I 'll never do it, Larry. The bed an' beddin' I 'll give; but the pig I 'll by no manner o' manes part wid."

"Put round the bottle," said Phelim, "we 're gettin' dhry agin—sayin' nothin' is dhroothy work. Ould man, will you not bother us about fortune!"

"Come, Paddy Donovan," said Devlin, "dang it, let out a little, considher he has ten guineas; an' I give it as my downright maxim an' opinion, that he 's fairly entitled to the pig."

"You 're welcome to give your opinion, Antony, an' I 'm welcome not to care a rotten sthraw about it. *My* daughter 's wife enough for him, widout a gown to her back, if he had his ten guineas doubled."

"An' *my* son," said Larry, "is husband enough for a betther girl nor ever called you father—not makin' little, at the same time, of either you or her."

"Paddy," said Burn, "there 's no use in spakin' that way. I agree wid Antony, that you ought to throw in the 'slip.'"

"Is it what I have to pay my next gale o' rint wid? No, no! If he won't marry her widout it, she 'll get as good that will."

"Saize the 'slip,'" said Phelim, "the darlin' herself here is all the slip I want."

"But I 'm not so," said Larry, "the 'slip' must go in, or it 's a brake off. Phelim can get girls that has money enough to buy us all out o' root. Did you hear *that*, Paddy Donovan?"

"I hear it," said Paddy, "but I 'll b'lieve as much of it as I like."

Phelim apprehended that as his father got warm with the liquor, he might, in vindicating the truth of his own assertion, divulge the affair of the old housekeeper.

"Ould man," said he, "have sinse, an' pass that over, if you have any regard for Phelim."

"I 'd not be brow-bate into anything," observed Donovan.

"Sowl, you would not," said Phelim; "for my part, Paddy, I 'm ready to marry your daughther (a squeeze to Peggy) widout a ha'p'orth at all, barrin' herself. It 's the girl I want, an' not the slip."

"Thin, be the book, you 'll get both, Phelim, for your dacency," said Donovan; "but, you see I wouldn't be bullied into puttin' one foot past the other, for the best man that ever stepped on black leather."

"Whish!" said Appleton, "that 's the go! Success ould heart! Give us your hand, Paddy,—here 's your good health, an' may you never button an empty pocket!"

"Is all settled?" inquired Molly.

"All, but about the weddin' an' the calls," replied her husband. "How are we to do about that, Larry?"

"Why, in the name o' Goodness, to save time," he replied, "let them be called on Sunday next, the two Sundays afther, an' thin marrid, wid a blessin'."

"I agree wid that entirely," observed Molly; "an' now, Phelim, clear away, you an' Peggy, off o' that chist, till we have our bit o' supper in comfort."

"Phelim, said Larry, "when the supper 's done, you must slip over to Roche's for a couple o' bottles more o' whisky. We 'll make a night of it."

"There 's two bottles in the house," said Donovan; "an', be the saikerment, the first man that talks of bringin' in more, till these is dhrunk, is ondacent."

This was decisive. In the mean time, the chest was turned into a table, the supper laid, and the attack commenced. All was pleasure, fun, and friendship. The reader may be assured that Phelim, during the negotiation, had not misspent the time with Peggy. Their conversation, however, was in a tone too low to be heard by those who were themselves talking loudly.

One thing, however, Phelim understood from his friend Sam Appleton, which was, that some clew had been discovered to an outrage in which he (Appleton) had been concerned. Above all other subjects, that was one on which Phelim was but a poor comforter. He himself found circumspection necessary; and he told Appleton, that if ever danger approached him, he had resolved either to enlist, or to go to America, if he could command the money.

"*You* ought to do that immediately," added Phelim.

"Where 's the money?" replied the other.

"I don't know," said Phelim; "but if I was bent on goin', the want of money wouldn't stop me, as long as it could be found in the counthry. We had to do as bad for others, an' it can't be a greater sin to do that much for ourselves."

"I 'll think of it," said Appleton. "At any rate, it 's in for a penny, in for a pound, wid me."

When supper was over, they resumed their drinking, sang songs, and

told anecdotes with great glee and hilarity. Phelim and Peggy danced jigs and reels, whilst Appleton sang for them, and the bottle also did its duty.

On separating about two o' clock, there was not a sober man among them but Appleton. He declined drinking, and was backed in his abstemiousness by Phelim, who knew that sobriety on the part of Sam would leave himself more liquor. Phelim, therefore, drank for them both, and that to such excess, that Larry, by Appleton's advice, left him at his father's, in consequence of his inability to proceed homewards. It was not, however, without serious trouble that Appleton could get Phelim and the father separated; and when he did, Larry's grief was bitter in the extreme. By much entreaty, joined to some vigorous shoves towards the door, he was prevailed upon to depart without him; but the old man compensated for the son's absence, by indulging in the most vociferous sorrow as he went along, about "*his* Phelim." When he reached home, his grief burst out afresh; he slapped the palms of his hands together, and indulged in a continuous howl, that one on hearing it would imagine to be the very echo of misery. When he had fatigued himself, he fell asleep on the bed, without having undressed, where he lay until near nine o'clock the next morning. Having got up and breakfasted, he related to his wife, with an aching head, the result of the last night's proceedings. Everything, he assured her, was settled; Phelim and Peggy were to be called the following Sunday, as Phelim, he supposed, had already informed her.

"Where's Phelim?" said the wife; "an' why didn't he come home wid you last night?"

"Where is Phelim? Why, Sheelah, woman, sure he *did* come home wid me last night."

"*Chrush orrin*, Larry, no! What could happen him? Why, man, I thought you knew where he was; an' in regard of his bein' abroad so often at night, myself didn't think it sthrange."

Phelim's absence astounded them both, particularly the father, who had altogether forgotten everything that had happened on the preceding night, after the period of his intoxication. He proposed to go back to Donovan's, to inquire for him, and was about to proceed there when Phelim made his appearance, dressed in his own tender apparel only. His face was three inches longer than usual, and the droop in his eye remarkably conspicuous.

"No fear of him," said the father: "here's himself. Arrah, Phelim, what became of you last night? Where wor you?"

Phelim sat down very deliberately and calmly, looked dismally at his mother, and then looked more dismally at his father.

"I suppose you're sick too, Phelim," said the father. "*My* head's goin' round like a top."

"Ate your breakfast," said his mother; "it's the best thing for you."

"Where wor you last night, Phelim?" inquired the father.

"What are you sain', ould man?"

"Who wor you wid last night?"

"Do, Phelim," said the mother, "tell us, aroon. I hope it wasn't *out* you wor. Tell us, avourneen?"

"Ould woman, what are you talkin' about?"

Phelim whistled "*ulican dhu oh*," or "the song of sorrow." At length he bounced to his feet, and exclaimed in a loud, rapid voice:—

"*Ma chuirp an diouol!* ould couple, but I'm robbed of my ten guineas by Sam Appleton!"

"Robbed by Sam Appleton! Heavens above!" exclaimed the father.

"Robbed by Sam Appleton! *Gra machree*, Phelim! no, you aren't!" exclaimed the mother.

"*Gra machree yourself!* but I say I am," replied Phelim; "robbed clane of every penny of it!"

Phelim then sat down to breakfast—for he was one of those happy mortals whose appetite is rather sharpened by affliction—and immediately related to his father and mother the necessity which Appleton's connection had imposed on him of leaving the country; adding, that while he was in a state of intoxication, he had been stripped of Appleton's clothes; that his own were left beside him; that when he awoke the next morning, he found his borrowed suit gone; that on searching for his own, he found to his misery, that the ten guineas had disappeared along with Appleton, who, he understood from his father, had "left the neighbourhood for a while, till the throuble he was in 'ud pass over."

"But I know where he's gone," said Phelim, "an' may the divil's luck go wid him, an' God's curse on the day I ever had anything to do wid that hell-fire Ribbon business! 'Twas he first brought me into it, the villain; an' now I'd give the townland we're in to be fairly out of it."

"*Hanim an diouol!*" said the father, "is the ten guineas gone? The curse of hell upon him, for a black desaver! Where's the villain, Phelim?"

"He's gone to America," replied the son. "The divil tare the tongue out o' myself, too! I should be puttin' him up to go there, an' to get money, if it was to be had. The villain bit me fairly."

"Well, but how are we to manage?" inquired Larry. "What's to be done?"

"Why," said the other, "to bear it, an' say nothin.' Even if he was in his father's house, the double-faced villain has me so much in his power, that I couldn't say a word about it. My curse on the Ribbon business, I say, from my heart out!"

That day was a miserable one to Phelim and the father. The loss of the ten guineas, and the feverish sickness produced from their debauch, rendered their situation not enviable. Some other small matters, too, in which Phelim was especially concerned, independent of the awkward situation in which he felt himself respecting the three calls on the following day, which was Sunday, added greater weight to his anxiety. He knew not how to manage, especially upon the subject of his habiliments, which certainly were in a very dilapidated state. An Irishman, however, never despairs. If he has not apparel of his own sufficiently decent to

wear on his wedding-day, he borrows from a friend. Phelim and his father remembered that there were several neighbours in the village, who would oblige him with a suit for the wedding; and as to the other necessary expenses, they did what their countrymen are famous for—they trusted to chance.

"We 'll work ourselves out of it some way," said Larry. "Sure if all fails us, we can sell the goats for the weddin' expenses. It 's one comfort that Paddy Donovan must find the dinner; an' all *we* have to get is the whisky, the marriage money, an' some other thrifles."

"They say," observed Phelim, "that people have more luck whin they 're married* than whin they 're single. I 'll have a bout at the marriage, so I will; for worse luck I can't have, if I had half a dozen wives, than I always met wid."

"I 'll go down," observed Larry, "to Paddy Donovan's, an' send him to the priest's to *give in* your names to be called to-morrow. Faith, it 's well that you won't have to appear, or I dunna how you 'd get over it."

"No," said Phelim, "that bill won't pass. You must go to the priest yourself, an' see the curate: if you go near Father O'Hara, it 'ud knock a plan on the head that I 've invinted. I 'm in the notion that I 'll make the ould woman bleed agin. I 'll squeeze as much out of her as 'ill bring me to America, for I 'm not overly safe here; or, if all fails, I 'll marry her, an' run away wid the money. It 'ud bring us all *acrass*."

Larry's interview with the curate was but a short one. He waited on Donovan, however, before he went, who expressed himself satisfied with the arrangement, and looked forward to the marriage as certain. As for Phelim, the idea of being called to three females at the same time, was one that tickled his vanity very much. Vanity, where the fair sex was concerned, had been always his predominant failing. He was not finally determined on marriage with any of them; but he knew that should he even escape the three, the *éclat* resulting from so celebrated a transaction, would recommend him to the sex for the remainder of his life. Impressed with this view of the matter, he sauntered about as usual; saw Foodle Flattery's daughter, and understood that her uncle had gone to the priest, to have his niece and worthy Phelim called the next day. But besides this hypothesis, Phelim had another, which, after all, was the real one. He hoped that the three applications would prevent the priest from calling him at all.

The priest, who possessed much sarcastic humour, on finding the name of Phelim come in as a candidate for marriage honours with three different women, felt considerably puzzled to know what he could be at. That Phelim might hoax one or two of them was very probable, but that he should have the effrontery to make *him* the instrument of such an affair, he thought a little too bad.

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* This is another absurd opinion peculiar to the Irish, and certainly one of the most pernicious that prevail among them. Indeed, I believe there is no country in which so many absurd maxims exist.

"Now," said he to his curate, as they talked the matter over that night, "it is quite evident that this scape-grace reckons upon our refusal to call him with *any* of those females to-morrow. It is also certain that not one of the three to whom he has pledged himself is aware that he is under similar obligations to the other two."

"How do you intend to act, Sir?" inquired the curate.

"Why," said Mr. O'Hara, "certainly to call him to each: it will give the business a turn for which he is not prepared. He will stand exposed, moreover, before the congregation, and that will be some punishment to him."

"I don't know as to the punishment," replied the curate. "If ever a human being was free from shame, Phelim is. The fellow will consider it a joke."

"Very possible," observed his superior; "but I am anxious to punish this old woman. It may prevent her from uniting herself with a fellow who certainly would, on becoming master of her money, immediately abandon her—perhaps proceed to America."

"It will also put the females of the parish on their guard against him," said the innocent curate, who knew not that it would raise him highly in their estimation. "We will have a scene, at all events," said Mr. O'Hara; "for I'm resolved to expose him. No blame can be attached to those whom he has duped, excepting only the old woman, whose case will certainly excite a great deal of mirth. That matters not, however; she has earned the ridicule, and let her bear it."

It was not until Sunday morning that the three calls occurred to Phelim in a new light. He forgot that the friends of the offended parties might visit upon his proper carcase the contumely he offered to them. This, however, did not give him much anxiety, for Phelim was never more in his element than when entering upon a row.

The Sunday in question was fine, and the congregation unusually large: one would think that all the inhabitants of the parish of Teerna-rogarah had been assembled. Most of them certainly were.

The priest, after having gone through the usual ceremonies of the Sabbath worship, excepting those with which he concludes the mass, turned round to the congregation, and thus addressed them:—

"I would not," said he, "upon any other occasion of this kind, think it necessary to address you at all; but this is one perfectly *unique*, and in some degree patriarchal, because, my friends, we are informed that it was allowed in the times of Abraham and his successors, to keep more than one wife. This custom is about being revived by a modern, who wants, in rather a barefaced manner, to palm himself upon us as a patriarch. And who do you think, my friends, this Irish patriarch is? Why, no other than bouncing Phelim O'Toole!"

This was received precisely as the priest anticipated: loud were the shouts of laughter from all parts of the congregation.

"Divil a fear o' Phelim!" they exclaimed. "He wouldn't be himself, or he 'd kick up a dust some way."

"Blessed Phelim! Just like him! Faith, he couldn't be marrid in the common coorse!"

"Arrah, whisht till we hear the name o' the happy crathur that 's to be blisthered with Phelim! The darlin 's in luck, whoever she is, an' has gained a blessed prize in the 'Bouncer.'"

"This bouncing patriarch," continued the priest, "has made his selection with great judgment and discrimination. In the first place, he has pitched upon a hoary damsel of long standing in the world;—one blessed with age and experience. She is qualified to keep Phelim's house well, as soon as it shall be built; but whether she will be able to keep Phelim himself, is another consideration. It is not unlikely that Phelim, in imitation of his great prototypes, may prefer living in a tent. But whether she keeps Phelim or the house, one thing is certain, that Phelim will keep her money. Phelim selected this aged woman, we presume, for her judgment; for surely she who has given such convincing proof of discretion, must make a useful partner to one who, like Phelim, has that virtue yet to learn. I have no doubt, however, but in a short time he will be as discreet as his teacher."

"Blood alive! Isn't that fine language?"

"You may say that! Begad, it 's himself *can* discoorse! What 's the Protestants to that?"

"The next upon the list is one who, though a poor man's daughter, will certainly *bring property* to Phelim. There is also an aptness in this selection which does credit to the 'Patriarch.' Phelim is a great dancer, an accomplishment with which we do not read that the patriarchs themselves were possessed; although we certainly do read that a light heel was of little service to Jacob. Well, Phelim carries a light heel, and the second female of his choice on this list carries a 'light hand;'* it is, therefore, but natural to suppose that, if ever they are driven to extremities, they will make light of many things which other people would consider as of weighty moment. Whether Phelim and she may long remain stationary in this country, is a problem more likely to be solved at the county assizes than here. It is not improbable that his Majesty may recommend the 'Patriarch' and one of his wives to try the benefit of a voyage to New South Wales, he himself graciously vouchsafing to bear their expenses."

"Divil a lie in that, any how! If ever any one crossed the wather, Phelim will. Can't his Reverence be funny whin he plases?"

"Many a time it was prophecized for him; an' his Reverence knows best."

"Begad, Phelim 's gettin' over the coals. But sure it 's all the way the father an' mother reared him."

"Tunder-an'-turf, is he goin' to be called to a pair o' them?"

"Faix, so it seems."

"Oh, the divil 's clip! Is he mad? But let us hear it out."

"The third damsel is by no means so well adapted for Phelim as either of the other two. What she could have seen in him is another problem much more difficult than the one I have mentioned. I would advise her to reconsider the subject, and let Phelim have the full benefit of the

* Intimating theft.

attention she may bestow upon it. If she finds the 'Patriarch' possessed of any *one* virtue, except *necessity*, I will admit that it is pretty certain that she will soon discover the longitude, and that has puzzled the most learned men of the world. If she marries this 'Patriarch,' I think the angels who may visit him will come in the shape of policemen; and that Phelim, so long as he can find a cudgel, will give them anything but a patriarchal reception, is another thing of which we may rest pretty certain.

"I now publish the banns of matrimony between Phelim O'Toole of Teernarogarah, and Bridget Doran of Dernascobe. If any person knows of any impediment why these two should not be joined in wedlock, they are bound to declare it.

"This Bridget Doran, my friends, is no other than my old housekeeper; but when, where, or how, Phelim could have won upon her juvenile affections is one of those mysteries which is never to be explained. I dare say, the match was brought about by despair on her side, and necessity on his. She despaired of getting a husband, and he had a necessity for the money. In point of age I admit she would make a very fit wife for any 'Patriarch.'"

Language could not describe the effect which this disclosure produced upon the congregation. The fancy of every one present was tickled at the idea of a union between Phelim and the old woman. It was followed by roars of laughter, which lasted several minutes.

"Oh, thin, the curse o' the crows upon him, was he only able to butther up the ould woman! Oh, *Ghe dhiven!* that flogs. Why, it's a wondher he didn't stale the ould slip, an' make a run-away match of it—ha, ha, ha! Musha, bad scran to her, but she had young notions of her own! A purty bird she picked up in Phelim!—ha, ha, ha!"

"I also publish the banns of matrimony between Phelim O'Toole of Teernarogarah and Sally Flattery of the same place. If any of you knows of any impediment why they should not be joined in wedlock, you are bound to declare it."

The mirth rose again, loud and general. Foodle Flattery, whose character was so well known, appeared so proper a father-in-law for Phelim, that his selection in this instance delighted them highly.

"Betther an' betther, Phelim! More power to you! You're fixed at last. Foodle Flattery's daughter—a known thief! Well, what harm? Phelim himself has pitch on his fingers—or had, any how, when he was growin' up—for many a thing stuck to them. Oh, bedad, now we know what his Reverence was at when he talked about the 'Sizes, bad luck to them! Betune her an' the ould woman, Phelim 'ud be in Paradise! Foodle Flattery's daughter! Begad, she 'll 'bring him property' sure enough, as his Reverence says."

"I also publish the banns of matrimony between Phelim O'Toole—whom we must in future call the 'Patriarch'—of Teernarogarah, and Peggy Donovan of the same place. If any of you knows any impediment in the way of their marriage, you are bound to declare it."

"Bravo! Phelim acushla. 'Tis you that's the blessed youth. Tundher-an'-whiskey, did ever any body hear of sich desate? To do three o' them. Be sure the Bouncer has some schame in this. Well,

one would suppose Paddy Donovan an' his daughther had more sinse nor to think of sich a runnagate as Bouncin' Phelim."

"No, but the Pathriark! Sure his Reverence sez that we mustn't call him anything agin but the Pathriark! Oh, be gorra, that's the name!—ha, ha, ha!"

When the mirth of the congregation had subsided, and their comments ended, the priest concluded in the following words:—

"Now, my friends, here is such a piece of profligacy as I have never, in the whole course of my pastoral duties, witnessed. It is the act of Phelim O'Toole, be it known, who did not scruple to engage himself for marriage to three females—that is, to two girls and an old woman—and who, in addition, had the effrontery to send me his name and theirs, to be given out all on the same Sunday; thus making *me* an instrument in his hands to hoax those who trusted in his word. That he can marry but one of them is quite clear; but that he would not scruple to marry the three, and three more to complete the half-dozen, is a fact which no one who knows him will doubt. For my part, I know not how this business may terminate. Of a truth he has contrived to leave the claims of the three females in a state of excellent confusion. Whether it raise or lessen him in their opinion I cannot pretend to determine. I am sorry for Donovan's daughter, for I know not what greater calamity could befall any honest family than a matrimonial union with Phelim O'Toole. I trust that this day's proceedings will operate as a caution to the females of the parish against such an unscrupulous reprobate. It is for this purpose only that I publish the names given in to me. His character was pretty well known before; it is now established; and having established it, I dismiss the subject altogether."

Phelim's fame was now nearly at its height. Never before had such a case been known; yet the people somehow were not so much astonished as might be supposed. On the contrary, had Phelim's courtship gone off like that of another man, they would have felt more surprised. We need scarcely say, that the "giving out" or "calling" of Phelim and the three damsels was spread over the whole parish before the close of that Sunday. Every one had it—man, woman, and child. It was told, repeated, and improved as it went along. New circumstances were added, fresh points made out, and other *dramatis personæ* brought in—all with great felicity, and quite suitable to Phelim's character.

Strongly contrasted with the amusement of the parishioners in general, was the indignation felt by the three damsels and their friends. The old housekeeper was perfectly furious; so much so, indeed, that the priest gave some dark hints at the necessity of sending for a straight waistcoat. Her fellow-servants took the liberty of breaking some strong jests upon her, in return for which she took the liberty of breaking two strong churn-staves upon them. Being a remarkably stout woman for her years, she put forth her strength, to such purpose that few of them went to bed without sore bones. The priest was seriously annoyed at it, for he found that his house was a scene of battle during the remainder of the day.

Sally Flattery's uncle, in the absence of her father, indignantly espoused

the cause of his niece. He and Donovan each went among their friends to excite in them a proper resentment, and to form a faction for the purpose of chastising Phelim. Their chagrin was bitter on finding that their most wrathful representations of the insult sustained by their families, were received with no other spirit than one of the most extravagant mirth. In vain did they rage, and fume, and swear; they could get no one to take a serious view of it. Phelim O'Toole was the author of all, and from him it was precisely what they had expected.

Phelim himself, and the father, on hearing of the occurrence after mass, were as merry as any other two in the parish. At first, the father was disposed to lose his temper; but on Phelim telling him he would bear no "gosther" on the subject, he thought proper to take it in good humour. About this time they had not more than a week's provision in the house, and only three shillings of capital. The joke of the three calls was too good a one to pass off as an ordinary affair; they had three shillings, and although it was their last, neither of them could permit the matter to escape as a dry joke. They accordingly repaired to the little public house of the village, where they laughed at the world, got drunk, hugged each other, despised all mankind, and staggered home, ragged and merry, poor and hearty, their arms about each other's necks, perfect models of filial duty, and paternal affection.

The reader is aware that the history of Phelim's abrupt engagement with the housekeeper, was conveyed by Fool Art, to Sally Flattery. Her thievish character rendered marriage as hopeless to her, as length of days did to Bridget Doran. No one knew the plan she had laid for Phelim, but this fool; and in order to secure his silence, she had promised him a shirt on the Monday after the first call. Now Art, as was evident by his endless habit of shrugging, felt the necessity of a shirt very strongly.

About ten o'clock on Monday, he presented himself to Sally, and claimed his recompense.

"Art," said Sally, "the shirt I intended for you, is upon Squire Nugent's hedge beside their garden. You know the family 's goin' up to Dublin on Thursday, Art, an' they 're gettin' their washin' done in time to be off. Go down, but don't let any one see you; take the third shirt on the row, an' bring it up to me till I smooth it for you."

Art sallied down to the hedge on which the linen had been put out to dry, and having reconnoitred the premises, shrugged himself, and cast a longing eye on the third shirt. With that knavish penetration, however, peculiar to such persons, he began to reflect that Sally might have some other object in view besides *his* accommodation. He determined, therefore, to proceed upon new principles—sufficiently safe, he thought, to protect him from the consequences of theft.

"Good-morrow, Bush," said Art, addressing that on which the third shirt was spread. "Isn't it a burnin' shame an' a sin for you," he continued, "to have sich a fine white shirt an you, an' me widout a stitch to my back. Will you swap?"

Having waited until the bush had due time to reply,

"Sorra fairer," he observed; "silence gives consint."

In less than two minutes he stripped, put on one of the Squire's best shirts, and spread out his own dusky fragment in its place.

"It 's a good thing," said Art, "to have a clear conscience; a fair exchange is no robbery."

Now, it so happened, that the squire himself, who was a humourist, and also a justice of the peace, saw Art putting his morality in practice at the hedge. He immediately walked out with an intention of playing off a trick upon the fool for his dishonesty; and he felt the greater inclination to do this in consequence of an opinion long current, that Art, though he had outwitted several, had never been outwitted himself.

Art had been always a welcome guest in the Squire's kitchen, and never passed the "Big House," as an Irish country gentleman's residence is termed, without calling. On this occasion, however, he was too cunning to go near it—a fact which the Squire observed. By taking a short cut across one of his own fields, he got before Art, and turning the angle of a hedge, met him trotting along at his usual pace.

"Well, Art, where now?"

"To the crass roads, your honour."

"Art, is not this a fine place of mine? Look at these groves, and the lawn, and the river there, and the mountains behind all. Is it not equal to Sir William R——'s?" Sir William was Art's favourite patron.

"Sir William, your honour, has all this at his place."

"But I think my views are finer."

"They 're fine enough," replied Art; "*but where 's the lake before the door?*"

The Squire said no more about his prospects.

"Art," he continued, "would you carry a letter for me to M——?"

"I 'll be wantin' somethin' to dhrink on the way," said Art.

"You shall get something to eat and dhrink before you go," said the Squire, "and half-a-crown for your trouble."

"Augh," exclaimed Art, "be dodda, Sir, you 're nosed like Sir William, and chinned like Captain Taylor." This was always Art's compliment when pleased.

The Squire brought him up to the house, ordered him refreshment, and while Art partook of it, wrote a letter or mittimus to the county gaoler, authorising him to detain the bearer in prison until he should hear further from him.

Art, having received the half-crown and the letter, appeared delighted; but on hearing the name of the person to whom it was addressed, he smelt a trick. He promised faithfully, however, to deliver it, and betrayed no symptoms whatever of suspicion. After getting some distance from the big-house, he set his wits to work, and ran over in his mind the names of those who had been most in the habit of annoying him. At the head of this list stood Phelim O'Toole, and on Phelim's head did he resolve to transfer the revenge, which the Squire, he had no doubt, intended to take on himself.

With considerable speed, he made way to Larry O'Toole's, where such a scene presented itself, as made him for a moment forget the immediate purport of his visit.

Opposite Phelim, dressed out in her best finery, stood the housekeeper, zealously insisting on either money or marriage. On one side of him stood old Donovan and his daughter, whom he had forced to come, in the character of a witness, to support his charges against the gay deceiver. On the other were ranged Sally Flattery, in tears, and her uncle in wrath, each ready to pounce upon Phelim.

Phelim stood the very emblem of patience and good-humour. When one of them attacked him, he winked at the other two; when either of the other two came on, he winked still at those who took breath. Sometimes he trod on his father's toe, lest the old fellow might lose the joke, and not unfrequently proposed their going to a public-house, and composing their differences over a bottle, if any of them would pay the expenses.

"What do you mane to do?" said the housekeeper; "but it 's asy known I 'm an unprojected woman, or I wouldn't be thrated as I am. If I had relations livin' or near me, we 'd pay you on the bones, for bringin' me to shame and scandal, as you have done."

"Upon my *sanies*, Mrs. Doran, I feel for your situation, so I do," said Phelim. "You 've outlived all your friends, an' if it was in my power to bring any o' them back to you I 'd do it."

"Oh, you desaver, is that the feelin' you have for me, when I thought you 'd be a guard an' a projection to me? You know I have the money, you sconce, an' how comfortable it 'ud keep us, if you 'd only see what 's good for you. You blarnied an' palavered me, you villain, till you gained my infections, an' thin you tuck the cholic as an excuse to lave me in a state of dissolution an' disparagement. You promised to marry me, an' you had no notion of it."

"You 're not the only one he has disgraced, Mrs. Doran," said Donovan. "A purty way he came down, himself an' his father, undher pretence of coortin' my daughther. He should lay down his ten guineas, too, to show us what he had to begin the world wid, the villain!—an' him had no notion of it aither."

"An' he should send this girl to make me go to the priest to have him and her called, the reprobate," said Nick Flattery; "an' him had no notion of it aither."

"Sure he sent us all there," exclaimed Donovan.

"He did," said the old woman.

"Not a doubt of it," observed Flattery.

"Ten guineas!" said the housekeeper. "An' so you brought my ten guineas in your pocket to coort another girl! Aren't you a right profligate?"

"Yes," said Donovan, "aren't you a right profligate?"

"Answer the dacent people," said Flattery; "aren't you a right profligate?"

"Take the world asy, all of ye," replied Phelim. "Mrs. Doran, there was three of you called, sure enough; but, be the vestments, I intinded—do you hear me, Mrs. Doran? Now have rason—I say, do *you* hear me? Be the vestments, I intinded to marry only *one* of you; an' that I 'll do still, except I 'm vexed—(a wink at the old woman). Yet you 're all flyin' at me, as if I had three heads or three tails upon me."

"Maybe the poor boy 's not so much to blame," said Mrs. Doran.

"There 's hussies in this world," and here she threw an angry eye upon the other two, "that 'ud give a man no pace till he 'd promise to marry them."

"Why did he promise to them that didn't want him thin?" exclaimed Donovan. "I 'm not angry that he didn't marry my daughther—for I wouldn't give her to him now—but I am at the slight he put an her."

"Paddy Donovan, did *you* hear what I said jist now?" replied Phelim. "I wish to Jamini some people 'ud have sinse! Be them five crasses, I know thim I intinded to marry, as well as I do where I 'm standin'. That 's plain talk, Paddy. I 'm sure the world 's not past yet, I hope" —(a wink at Paddy Donovan.)

"An' wasn't he a big rascal to make little of my brother's daughther as he did?" said Flattery; "but he 'll rub his heels together for the same act."

"Nick Flatthery, do you think I could marry three wives? Be that horseshoe over the door, Sally Flatthery, you didn't thrate me dacent. She did not, Nick; an' you ought to know that it was wrong of her to come here to-day."

"Well, but what do you intind to do Phelim, avourn—you profligate?" said the half-angry, half-pacified housekeeper, who, being the veteran, always led on the charge.

"Why, I intend to marry *one* of you," said Phelim. "I say, Mrs. Doran, do you see thim ten fingers acrass—be thim five crasses I 'll do what I said, if nothing happens to put it aside."

"Then be an honest man," said Flattery, "an' tell us which o' them you *will* marry."

"Nick, don't you know I always regarded *your* family. If I didn't that I may never do an ill turn! Now! But some people can't see anything. Arra, tundher-an-whisky, man, would you expect me to tell out before all that 's here, who I 'll marry—to be hurtin' the feelins of the rest. Faith, I 'll never do a shabby thing."

"What rekimpinse will you make *my* daughter for bringin' down her name afore the whole parish, along wid them she oughtn't to be named in the one day wid?" said Donovan.

"An' who is that, Paddy Donovan?" said the housekeeper, with a face of flame.

"None of your broad hints, Paddy," said Nick. "If it 's a collusion to Sally Flattery you mane, take care I don't make you ate your words."

"Paddy," exclaimed Phelim, "you oughtn't to be hurtin' their feelins!"—(a friendly wink to Paddy.)

"If you mane me," said the housekeeper, "by the crook on the fire, I 'd lave you a mark."

"I mane you for one, thin, since you provoke me," replied Donovan.

"For *one*, is it?" said Nick; "an' who 's the other, i' you plase?"

"Your brother's daughter," he replied. "Do you think I 'd *even** my daughter to a thief?"

"Be gorra," observed Phelim, "that 's too provokin', an' what I wouldn't bear. Will ye keep the pace, I say, till I spake a word to

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* Compare.

Mrs. Doran? Mrs. Doran, can I have a word or two wid you outside the house?"

"To be sure you can," she replied! "I'd give you fair play, if the *diouol* was in you."

Phelim, accordingly, brought her out, and thus accosted her,—

"Now, Mrs. Doran, you think I thrated you ondacent; but do you see that book?" said he, producing a book of ballads, on which he had sworn many a similar oath before; "Be the contints o' that book, as sure as you're beside me, its *you* I intind to marry! These other two—the curse o' the crows upon them! I wish we could get them from about the place—is both dyin' for love o' me, an' I surely did promise to get myself *called* to them. They wanted it to be a promise of marriage; but, says I, 'sure if we're called together it's the same, for whin it comes to that, all's right,—an' so I tould both o' them, unknownst to one another. Arra, be my sowl, you'd make two like them, so you would; an' if you hadn't a penny, I'd marry you afore aither o' them to-morrow. Now, there's the whole sacret, an' don't be onaisy about it. Tell Father O'Hara how it is, whin you go home, an' that he must call the three o' you to me agin, on next Sunday, and the Sunday afther, plase Goodness; jist that I may keep my promise to them. You know I couldn't have luck or grace if I marrid you wid the sin of two broken promises on me."

"My goodness, Phelim, but you tuck a burdyeen off o' me! Faix, you'll see how happy we'll be."

"To be sure we will! But I'm tould you're sometimes crass, Mrs. Doran. Now, you must promise to be kind an' lovin' to the childhre, or, be the vestment, I'll brake off the match yet."

"Och, an' why wouldn't I, Phelim acushla? Sure that's but rason."

"Well, take this book an' swear it. Be gorra, your word won't do, for it's a thing my mind's made up on. It's I that'll be fond o' the childhre."

"An' how am I to swear it, Phelim? for I never tuck an oath myself yet."

"Take the book in your hand, shut one eye, and say the words afther me. Be the contints o' this book."

"Be the contints o' this book,"

"I'll be kind, an' motherly, an' boistherous."

"I'll be kind, an' motherly, an' boistherous,"

"To my own childhre,"

"To my own childhre,"

"An' never bate or abuse thim,"

"An' never bate or abuse thim,"

"Barrin' whin they desarve it;"

"Barrin' whin they desarve it;"

"An' this I swear,"

"An' this I swear,"

"In the presence of *St. Phelim.*"

"In the presence of *St. Phelim.*"

"Amin!"

"Amin!"

"Now, Mrs. Doran, acushla, if you could jist know how asy my conscience is about the childhre, poor crathurs, you 'd be in mighty fine spirits. There won 't be sich a lovin' husband, begad, in Europe. It 's I that 'll coax you, an' butther you up like a new pair o' brogues; but, begad, you must be sweeter than liquorice or sugar-candy to me. Won 't you, darlin'?"

"Be the crass, Phelim, darlin', jewel, I 'll be as kind a wife as ever breathed! Arrah, Phelim, won 't you come down to-morrow evenin'? There 'll be no one at home but myself, an'—ha, ha, ha!—Oh, you coaxin' rogue! But, Phelim, you mustn't be——Oh, you 're a rogue! I see you laughin'! Will you come, darlin'?"

"Surely. But, death alive! I was near forgettin'; sure, bad luck to the penny o' the ten guineas but I paid away."

"Paid away! Is it my ten guineas?"

"Your ten guineas, darlin'; an' right well I managed it. Didn't I secure Pat Hanratty's farm by it? Sam Appleton's uncle had it as good as taken; so, begad, I came down wid the ten guineas, by way of airles, an' now we have it. I knew you'd be plased to hear it, an' that you 'd be proud to give me ten more for clo'es an' the weddin' expenses. Isn't that good news, avourneen? Eh, you duck o' diamonds? Faith, let Phelim alone! An' another thing—I must call you *Bridget* for the future: it's sweeter an' more lovin'"

"Phelim, I wish you had consulted wid me afore you done it: but it can't be helped. Come down to-morrow evenin', an' we 'll see what's to be done."

"The grace o' heaven upon you, but you *are* the winnin'est woman alive this day! Now take my advice, an' go home without comin' in. I 'm wantin' to get this other pair off o' my hands, as well as I can; an' our best way is to do all widout noise. Isn't it, darlin'?"

"It is, Phelim, jewel; an' I'll go."

"Faith, Bridget, you've dealt in thracle afore now, you're so sweet. Now, acushla, farewell; an' take care of yourself till to-morrow evenin'!"

Phelim, on re-entering his father's cabin, found Larry and Peggy Donovan placed between her father and Flattery, each struggling to keep them asunder. Phelim at first had been anxious to set them by the ears, but his interview with the old woman changed his plan of operations altogether. With some difficulty he succeeded in repressing their tendency to single combat, which, having effected, he brought out Flattery and his niece, both of whom he thus addressed:—

"Be the vestment, Sally, only that my regard an' love for you is uncommon, I 'd break off the affair altogether, so I would."

"An' why would you do so, Phelim O'Toole?" inquired the uncle.

"Bekase," replied Phelim, "you came here an' made a show of me, when I wished to have no *bruliagh*, at all at all. In regard of Peggy Donovan, I never spoke a word to the girl about marriage since I was christened. Saize the syllable! My father brought me down there to gosther awhile, the other night, an' Paddy sent away for whisky. An' the curse o'Cromwell on myself! I should get tossicated. So while I was half-saes over, the two ould rips set to makin' the match—planned

to have us called—an' me knowin' nothin' about it, good, bad, or indifferent. That's the thruth, be the sky above us."

"An' what have you to say about the housekeeper, Phelim?"

"Why I don't know yet who *done* me there. I was about takin' a farm, an' my father borried ten guineas from her. Somebody heard it—I suspect Sam Appleton—an' gave in our names to the priest, to be called, makin' a good joke of it. All sorts o' luck to them, barrin' good luck, that did it; but they put me in a purty state! But never heed! I'll find them out yet. Now go home, both o' you, an' I'll slip down in half an hour, with a bottle o' whisky in my pocket. We'll talk over what's to be done. Sure Sally here, knows that it's my own intherest to marry her and no one else."

"If my father thought you would, Phelim, he'd not *stag*, even if he was to crass the wather!"

"Go home, Sally darlin' till I get this mad Donovan an' his daughter away. Be all that's beautiful I'll be apt to give him a taste o' my shillely, if he doesn't behave himself! Half an hour I'll be down in—wid the bottle; an' don't you go, Nick, till you see me."

"Phelim," said the uncle, "you know how the case is. You must aither marry the girl, or take a long voyage, abouchal. We'll have no bouncin' or palaver."

"Bedad, Mick, I've great patience wid you," said Phelim, smiling: "go off, I say, both of you."

They then proceeded homewards, and Phelim returned to appease the anger of Donovan, as he had that of the others. Fresh fiction was again drawn forth, every word of which the worthy father corroborated. They promised to go down that night and drink another bottle together; a promise which they knew by the state of their finances, it was impossible to fulfil. The prospect of the "booze," however, tranquillised Donovan, who in his heart relished a glass of liquor as well as either Phelim or the father. Shaking of hands and professions of friendship were again beginning to multiply with great rapidity, when Peggy thought proper to make a few observations on the merits of her admirer.

"In regard to me," she observed, "you may save yourselves the throuble o' comin'. I wouldn't marry Phelim, afther what the priest said yistherday, if he had the riches o' the townland we're spakin' in. I never cared for him, nor liked him; an' it was only to plase my father an' mother, that I consinted to be called to him at all. I'll never join myself to the likes of him. If I do, may I be a corpse the next minute!"

Having thus expressed herself, she left her father, Phelim, and Larry, to digest her sentiments, and immediately went home.

Donovan, who was outrageous at this contempt of his authority, got his hat, with the intention of compelling her to return and retract, in their presence, what she had said; but the daughter, being the more light-footed of the two, reached home before he could overtake her; where, backed by her mother, she maintained her resolution, and succeeded, ere long, in bringing the father over to her opinion.

During this whole scene in Larry's, Fool Art sat in that wild abstrac-

tion which characterises the unhappy class to which he belonged. He muttered to himself, laughed—or rather chuckled—shrugged his shoulders, and appeared to be as unconscious of what had taken place as an automaton. When the coast was clear he rose up, and plucking Phelim's skirt, beckoned him towards the door.

"Phelim," said he, when they had got out, "would you like to airn a crown?"

"Tell me how, Art?" said Phelim.

"A letther from the Square to the gaoler of M—— gaol. If you bring back an answer, you 'll get a crown, your dinner, an' a quart o' sthrong beer."

"But why don't you bring it yourself, Art?"

"Why I 'm afeard. Sure they 'd keep me in gaol, I 'm tould, if they' d catch me in it. Aha! Be dodda, I won't go near them: sure they 'd hang me for shootin' Bonypart.—Aha!"

"Must the answer be brought back to-day, Art?"

"Oh! It wouldn't do to-morrow at all. Be dodda, no! Five shillins, your dinner, an' a quart of sthrong beer!—Aha! But you must give me a shillin' or two, to buy a sword; for the Square 's goin' to make me a captain: thin I 'll be grand! an' I 'll make you a sargin'."

This seemed a windfall to Phelim. The unpleasant dilemma in which Sally Flattery had placed him, by the fabricated account of her father's imprisonment, made him extremely anxious to see Foodle himself, and to ascertain the *precise* outrage for which he had been secured. Here then was an opportunity of an interview with him, and of earning five shillings, a good dinner, and a quart of strong beer, as already specified.

"Art," said he, "give me the letther, an' I 'm the boy that 'll soon do the job. Long life to you, Art! Be the contints o' the book, Art, I 'll never pelt you or vex you agin, my worthy; an' I 'll always call you captain!"

Phelim immediately commenced his journey to M——, which was only five miles distant, and in a very short time reached the gaol, saw the gaoler, and presented his letter.

The latter, on perusing it, surveyed him with the scrutiny of a man whose eye was practised in scanning offenders.

Phelim, whilst the gaoler examined him, surveyed the strong and massy bolts with which every door and hatchway was secured. Their appearance produced rather an uncomfortable sensation in him; so much so, that when the gaoler asked him his name, he thought it more prudent, in consequence of a touch of conscience he had, to personate Art for the present, inasmuch as he felt it impossible to assume any name more safe than that of an idiot.

"My name is Art Maguire," said he in reply to the gaoler. "I 'm messenger to Square S——, the one he had was discharged on Friday last. I expect soon to be made groom, too."

"Come this way," said the gaoler, "and you shall have an answer."

He brought Phelim into the prison-yard, where he remained for about twenty minutes, labouring under impressions which he felt becoming gradually more unpleasant. His anxiety was not lessened on perceiving

twenty or thirty culprits, under the management of the turnkeys, enter the yard, where they were drawn up in a line, like a file of soldiers.

"What 's *your* name?" said one of the turnkeys.

"Art Maguire," replied Phelim.

"Stand here," said the other, shoving him amongst the prisoners. "Keep your head up, you villain, an' don't be ashamed to look your friends in the face. It won't be hard to identify you, at any rate, you scoundrel. A glimpse of that phiz, even by starlight, would do you, you dog. Jack, tell Mr. S. to bring in the gintlemen—they 're all ready."

Phelim's dismay on finding himself under drill with such a villanous crew was indescribable. He attempted to parley with the turnkey, but was near feeling the weight of his heavy keys for daring to approach a man placed in authority.

While thus chewing the cud of sweet and bitter fancy, three gentlemen, accompanied by the gaoler, entered the yard, and walked backward and forward in front of the prisoners, whose faces and persons they examined with great care. For a considerable time they could not recognise any of them; but just as they were about to give up the scrutiny, one of the gentlemen approached Phelim, and looking narrowly into his countenance, exclaimed,

"Here, gaoler, this man I identify. I cannot be mistaken in his face; the rough visage and drooping eye of that fellow put all doubt as to his identity out of question. What's his name?"

"He gives his name, Sir, as Arthur Maguire."

"Arthur what, Sir?" said another of the turnkeys, looking earnestly at Phelim. "Why, Sir, this is the fellow that swore the alibis for the Kellys—ay, an' for the Delaneys, an' for the O'Briens. His name is Phelim O'Toole; an' a purty boy he is, by all report."

Phelim, though his heart sank within him, attempted to banter them out of their bad opinion of him; but there was something peculiarly dismal and melancholy in his mirth.

"Why, gintlemen—ha, ha!—be gorra, I'd take it as a convanience—I mane, as a favour—if you'd believe me that there 's a small taste of mistake here. I was sent by Square S. wid a letter to Mr. S——t, an' he gave me fifty ordhers to bring him back an answer this day. As for Phelim O'Toole, if you mane the rascal that swears the alibis, faith, I can't deny but I 'm as like him, the villain, as one egg is to another. Bad luck to his 'dhroop,' any how; little I thought that it would ever bring me into throuble—ha, ha, ha! Mr. S——t, what answer have you for the Square, Sir? Bedad, I 'm afeard I 'll be late."

"That letter, Master Maguire, or Toole, or whatever your name is, authorises me to detain you, as a prisoner, until I hear further from Mr. S."

"I identify him, distinctly," said the gentleman, once more. "I neither doubt nor waver on the subject; so you will do right to detain him. I shall lodge informations against him immediately."

"Sir," said Phelim to the gaoler, "the Square couldn't mane me at all, in regard that it was another person he gave the letter to, for to bring to

you, the other person gave it to me. I can make my oath of that. Be gorra, you 're playin' your thricks upon sthrangers now, I suppose."

"Why, you lying rascal," said the gaoler, "have you not a few minutes ago asserted to the contrary? Did you not tell me that your name was Arthur, or Art Maguire? That you are Mr. S.'s messenger, and expect to be made his groom. And now you deny all this."

"He 's Phelim O'Toole," said the turnkey, "I'll swear to him; but if you wait for a minute, I 'll soon prove it."

He immediately retired to the cell of a convict, whom he knew to be from the townland of Teernarogarah; and ordering its inmate to look through the bars of his window, which commanded the yard, he asked him if there was any one among them whom he knew.

The fellow in a few minutes replied, "Whethen, divil a one, barrin' bouncin' Phelim O'Toole."

The turnkey brought him down to the yard, where he immediately recognised Phelim as an old friend, shook hands with him, and addressed him by his name.

"Bad luck to you," said Phelim in Irish, "is this a place to welcome your friends to?"

"There is some mystery here," said the gaoler. "I suppose the fact is, that this fellow returned a wrong name to Mr. S., and that that accounts for the name of Arthur Maguire being in the letter."

All Phelim's attempts to extricate himself were useless. He gave them the proper version of the letter affair with Fool Art, but without making the slightest impression. The gaoler desired him to be locked up.

"Divil fire you all, you villains!" exclaimed Phelim, "is it goin' to put me in crib ye are for no rason in life? Doesn 't the whole parish know that I was never off o' my bed for the last three months, wid a complaint I had, antil widin two or three days agone!"

"There are two excellent motives for putting you in crib," said the gaoler; "but if you can prove that you have been confined to your bed so long as you say, why it will be all the better for yourself. Go with the turnkey."

"No, tarenation to the fut I'll go," said Phelim, "till I'm carrid."

"Doesn't the gintleman identify you, you villain," replied one of the turnkeys; "an' isn't the Square's letther in your favour?"

"Villain, is id!" exclaimed Phelim. "An' from a hangman's cousin, too, we're to bear this!—eh? Take that, any how, an' maybe you'll get more when you don 't expect it. Whoo! Success, Phelim! There 's blood in you still, abouchal!"

He accompanied the words by a spring of triumph from the ground, and surveyed the already senseless turnkey with exultation. In a moment, however, he was secured for the purpose of being put into strong irons.

"To the devil's warmin' pan wid ye all," he continued, "you may do your worst. I defy you. Ha! by the heavens above me, *you 'll* suffer for this, my fine gintleman. What can ye do but hang or thransport me, you villains? I tell ye, if a man's sowl had a crust of sin on it a foot thick, the best way to get it off 'ud be jist to shoot a dozen like you. Sin! Oh, the divil saize the sin at all in it. But wait! Did ye ever

hear of a man they call Dan O'Connell? Be my sowl, he 'll make yez rub your heels together, for keepin' an innocent boy in gaol, that there 's no law or no warrant out for. This is the way we 're thrated by thim that 's ridin' rough shod over us. But have a taste o' patience, ye scoundrels! It won 't last, I can tell yez. Our day will soon come, an' thin I'd recommend yez to thravel for your health. Hell saize the day's pace or happiness ever will be seen in the country, till laws, an' judges, an' juries, an' gaols, an' gaolers, an' turnkeys, an' hangmen, is all swep out of it. Saize the day! An' along wid them, goes the parsons, an' procthors, tithes an' taxes, all to the devil together. That day 's not far off, ye d——d villains. An' now I tell ye, that if a hair o' my head 's touched—ay, if I was hanged to-morrow—I 'd lave *them* behind me that 'ud put a bullet, wid the help an' blessin' o' God, through any one that 'll injure me! So lay that to your conscience, an' do your best. Be the crass, O'Connell 'ill make you look nine ways at wanst for this! He 's the boy can put the pin in your noses! He 's the boy can make yez thrimble, one an all o' yez—like a dog in a wet sack! An', wid the blessin' o' God, he 'll help us to put our feet on your necks afore long!"

"That 's a prudent speech," observed the gaoler; "it will serve you very much."

Phelim consigned him to a very warm settlement in reply.

"Bring the ruffian off," added the gaoler; "put him in solitary confinement."

"Put me wid Foodle Flattery," said Phelim; "you've got *him* here, an' I 'll go nowhere else. Faith, you 'll suffer for givin' me false imprisonment. Doesn't O'Connell's name make you shake? Put me wid Foodle Flattery, I say."

"Foodle Flattery! There is no such man here. Have you got such a person here?" inquired the gaoler of the turnkey.

"Not at present," said the turnkey; "but I know Foodle well. We 've had him here twice. Come away, Phelim; follow me; you 're goin' to be put where you 'll have an opportunity of sayin' your prayers."

He then ushered Phelim to a cell, where the reader may easily imagine what he felt. His patriotism rose to a high pitch; he deplored the wrongs of his country bitterly, and was clearly convinced that until gaols, judges, and assizes, together with a long train of similar grievances, were utterly abolished, Ireland could never be right, nor persecuted "boys," like himself, at full liberty to burn or murder the enemies of their country with impunity. Notwithstanding these heroic sentiments, an indifferent round oath more than once escaped him against Ribbonism in whole and in part. He cursed the system, and the day, and the hour on which he was inveigled into it. He cursed those who had initiated him; nor did his father and mother escape for their neglect of his habits, his morals, and his education. This occurred when he had time for reflection. Whilst thus dispensing his execrations, the gaoler and the three gentlemen, having been struck with his allusion to Foodle Flattery, and remembering that Foodle was of indifferent morals, came to the unanimous opinion that it would be a good plan to secure him; and by informing him that Phelim was in prison upon a capital charge, endeavour to

work upon his fears, by representing his companion as disposed to turn approver. The state of the country, and Foodle's character justified his apprehension on suspicion. He was accordingly taken, and when certified of Phelim's situation, acted precisely as had been expected. With very little hesitation, he made a full disclosure of the names of several persons concerned in burnings, waylayings, and robbery of arms. The two first names on the list were those of Phelim and Appleton, with several besides, some of whom bore an excellent, and others an execrable character in the country.

The next day Fool Art went to Larry's, where he understood that Phelim was on the missing list. This justified his suspicions of the Squire; but by no means lessened his bitterness against him, for the prank he had intended to play upon him. With great simplicity, he presented himself at the Big House, and met its owner on the lawn, accompanied by two other gentlemen. The magistrate was somewhat surprised at seeing Art at large, when he imagined him to be under the gaoler's lock and key.

"Well, Art," said he, concealing his amazement, "did you deliver my letter?"

"It went safe, your honour," replied Art.

"Did you yourself give it into his hands, as I ordered you?"

"Whoo! Be dodda, would your honour think Art 'ud tell a lie? Sure he read it. Aha!"

"An' what did he say, Art?"

"Whoo! Why, that he didn't know which of us had the least sense. You for sendin' a fool on a message, or me for deliverin' it."

"Was that all that happened?"

"No, Sir. He said," added the fool, with bitter sarcasm, alluding to a duel, in which the Squire's character had not come off with flying colours—"he said, Sir, that whin you have another challenge to fight, you may get sick *agin* for threepence to the poticarry."

This having been the manner in which the Squire was said to have evaded the duel, it is unnecessary to say that Art's readiness to refresh his memory on the subject, prevented him from being received at the Big House in future.

Reader, remember that we only intended to give you a sketch of Phelim O'Toole's courtship; we will, however, go so far beyond our original plan, as to apprise you of his fate.

When it became known in the parish that he was in gaol, under a charge of felony, Sally Flattery abandoned all hopes of securing him as a husband. The housekeeper felt suitable distress, and hoped, should the poor boy be acquitted, that "he might hould up his head wid any o' them." Phelim, through the agency of his father, succeeded in getting ten guineas from her, to pay the lawyers for defending him; not one penny of which he applied to the purpose for which he obtained it. The expenses of his defence were drawn from the Ribbon fund, and the Irish reader cannot forget the eloquent and pathetic appeal made by his counsel to the jury on his behalf, and the strength with which the fact of his being the whole support of a helpless father and mother was stated. The

appeal, however, was ineffectual; worthy Phelim was convicted, and sentenced to transportation for life. When his old acquaintances heard the nature of his destiny, they remembered the two prophecies that had been so often uttered concerning him. One of them was certainly fulfilled to the letter, we mean that in which it was stated, "that the greatest swaggerer among the girls generally comes to the wall at last." The other, though not literally accomplished, was touched at least upon the spirit; transportation for life ranks next to hanging.

We cannot avoid mentioning a fact connected with Phelim which came to light while he remained in prison. By incessant trouble he was prevailed upon, or rather compelled, to attend the prison school, and on examining him, touching his religious knowledge, it appeared that he was ignorant of the plainest truths of Christianity; that he knew not how or by whom the Christian religion had been promulgated; nor, indeed, any other moral truth connected with Revelation.

Immediately after his transportation, Larry took to drink, and his mother to begging, for she had no other means of living. In this mode of life, the husband was soon compelled to join her. They are both mendicants, and Sheelah now appears sensible of the error in their manner of bringing Phelim up.

"Ah! Larry," she is sometimes heard to say, "I doubt that we wor wrong for flyin' in the face o' God, becase he didn't give us childhre. An' when it plased him to grant us a son, we oughtn't to 've spoiled him by over-indulgence, an' by lettin' him have his own head in everything, as we did. If we had sint him to school, an' larned him to work, an' corrected him when he desarved it, instead of laughin' at his lies, an' misbehaviour, and his oaths, as if they wor sport—ay' an' abusin' the nabours when they 'd complain of him, or tell us what he was—ay!—if we had, it 's a credit an' a comfort he 'd be to us now, an' not a shame, an' a disgrace, an' an affliction. We made our own bed, Larry, an' now we must lie down an it. An', God help us! we made *his* bed too, poor boy, an' a hard one it is. God forgive us! but, any how, my heart 's breakin', for bad as he was, sure we haven't him to look upon!"

"Thrue," replied Larry. "Still he was game an' cute to the last. Biddy Doran's ten guineas will sarve him *beyant*, poor fellow. But sure the 'boys' kep their word to him, any how, in regard of shootin' Foodle Flattery. Myself was never betther plased in my life, than to hear that he got the slugs into his heart, the villain!"

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*** We have attempted to draw Phelim O'Toole as closely as possible to the character of that class, whose ignorance, want of education, and absence of all moral principle, constitute them the shame and reproach of the country. By such men the peace of Ireland is destroyed, illegal combinations formed, blood shed, and nightly outrages committed. There is nothing more certain than this plain truth, that if proper religious and moral knowledge were impressed upon the early principles of persons like

Phelim, a conscience would be created capable of revolting from crime. Whatever the grievances of a people may be, whether real or imaginary, one thing is clear, that neither murder nor illegal violence of any description, can be the proper mode of removing or redressing them. We have kept Phelim's Ribbonism in the back-ground, because its details could excite only aversion, and preferred exhibiting his utter ignorance of morality upon a less offensive subject, in order that the reader might be enabled to infer, rather than to witness with his mind's eye, the deeper crimes of which he was capable.

# THE POOR SCHOLAR

ONE day about the middle of November, in the year 18—, Dominick M'Evoy and his son Jemmy were digging potatoes on the side of a hard, barren hill, called Esker Dhu. The day was bitter and wintry, the men were thinly clad, and as the keen blast swept across the hill with considerable violence, the sleet-like rain which it bore along, pelted into their garments with pitiless severity. The father had advanced into more than middle age; and having held, at a rack-rent, the miserable waste of farm which he occupied, he was compelled to exert himself in its cultivation, despite either obduracy of soil, or inclemency of weather. This day, however, was so unusually severe, that the old man began to feel incapable of continuing his toil. The son bore it better; but whenever a cold rush of stormy rain came over them, both were compelled to stand with their sides against it, and their heads turned, so as that the ear almost rested back upon the shoulder, in order to throw the rain off their faces. Of each, however, that cheek which was exposed to the rain and storm was beaten into a red hue; whilst the other part of their faces was both pale and hunger-pinched.

The father paused to take breath, and, supported by his spade, looked down upon the sheltered inland which, inhabited chiefly by Protestants and Presbyterians, lay rich and warm-looking under him.

"Why thin," he exclaimed to the son—a lad about fifteen,—"sure I know well I oughtn't to curse yez, anyway, you black set! an' yit, the Lord forgive me my sins, I 'm almost timpted to give yez a volley, an' that from my heart out! Look at thim, Jimmy agra—only look at the black thieves! how warm an' wealthy they sit there in our own ould possessions, an' here we must toil till our fingers are worn to the stumps, upon this thievin' bent. The curse of Cromwell on it!—You might as well ax the divil for a blessin', as expect anything like a dacent crop out of it.—Look at thim two ridges!—such a poor sthring o' praties is in it! —one here an' one there—an' yit we must turn up the whole ridge for that same! Well, God sind the time soon, when the right will take place, Jimmy agrah!"

"An' doesn't Pasthorini say it? Sure whin Twenty-five comes, *we'll* have our own agin: the right will overcome the might—the bottomless pit will be locked—ay, double boulted, if St. Pether gets the kays, for he 's the very boy that will accommodate the heretics wid a warm corner; an' yit, faith, there 's many o' thim that myself 'ud put in a good word for, afther all."

"Throth, an' here 's the same, Jimmy. There 's Jack Stuart, an' if there 's a cool corner in hell, the same Jack will get it—an' that he may, I pray Gor this day, an' amin! The Lord sind it to him! for he richly desarves it. Kind, neighbourly, and frindly, is he an' all belongin' to him; an' I wouldn't be where a hard word 'ud be spoken of him, nor a dog in connexion wid the family ill thrated; for which rason may he get a cool corner in hell, I humby sufflicate."

"What do you think of Jack Taylor? Will he be cosey?"

"Throth, I doubt so—a blessed youth is Jack; yit myself 'ud hardly wish it. He 's a heerum-skeerum, divil-may-care fellow, no doubt of it, an' laughs at the priests, which same I 'm thinkin' will get him below stairs more nor a new-milk heat, any way; but thin, agin, he thrates thim dacent, an' gives thim good dinners, an' they take all this rolliken in good part, so that it 's likely he 's not in airnest in it, an' surely they ought to know best, Jimmy."

"What do you think of *Yallow Sam?—honest Sam*, that they say was born widout a heart, an' carries the *black* wool in his ears, to keep out the cries of the widows an' the orphans, that are long rotten in their graves through his dark villany?—He 'll get a snug birth!" *

"*Yallow Sam*," replied the old man, slowly, and a dark shade of intense hatred blackened his weather-beaten countenance, as he looked in the direction from which the storm blew: "'twas *he* left us where we 're standin', Jimmy—undher this blast, that 's cowldher an' bittherer nor a step-mother's breath, this cuttin' day! 'Twas *he* turned us on the wide world, whin your poor mother was risin' out of her faver. 'Twas he squenched the hearth, whin she wasn't able to lave the house, till I carried her in my arms into Paddy Cassidy's—the tears fallin' from my eyes upon her face, that I loved next to God. Didn't he give our farm

* This was actually said of the person alluded to—a celebrated usurer and agent to two or three estates, who was a little deaf, and had his ears occasionally stuffed with black wool.

to his bastard son, a purple Orangeman? Out we went, to the winds an' skies of heaven, bekase the rich *bodagh* made intherest aginst us. I tould him whin he chated me out o' my fifteen goolden guineas, that his masther, the landlord, should hear of it; but I could never get next or near him, to make my complaint. Eh?—a snug birth! I 'm only afeard that hell has no corner hot enough for him—but lave that to the divil himself: if he doesn't give him the best thratement hell can afford, why I 'm not here."

"Divil a one o' the *ould boy's* so bad as they say, father; he gives it to *thim* hot an' heavy, at all evints."

"Why even if he was at a loss about Sam, depind upon it, he 'd get a hint from his betthers above, that 'ud be sarviceable."

"They say he visits him as it is, an' that Sam can't sleep widout some one in the room wid him. Dan Philips says the priest was there, an' had a Mass in every room in the house; but Charley Mack tells me there 's no thruth in it. He was advised to it, he says; but it seems the ould boy has too strong a hoult of him, for Sam said he 'd have the divil any time sooner nor the priest, and its likest what he would say."

"Och, och, Jimmy, avick, I 'm tir'd out! We had betther give in; the day 's too hard, an' there 's no use in standin' agin the weather that 's in it. Lave the ould villian to God, who he can't chate, any way."

"Well, may our curse go along wid the rest upon him, for dhrivin' us to sich an unnatural spot as this! Hot an' heavy, into the sowl an' marrow of him may it penethrate! An' sure that 's no more than all the counthry's wishin' him, whether or not—not to mintion the curses that 's risin' out o' the grave agin him, loud an' piercin'!"

"God knows it 's not slavin' yourself on sich a day as this *you 'd* be, only for him. Had we kep our farm, you 'd be now well an in your larnin' for a priest—an' there 'ud be one o' the family sure to be a gintleman, any how; but that 's gone too, agra. Look at the smoke, how comfortable it rises from Jack Sullivan's, where the priest has a Station to-day. 'Tisn't fishin' for a sthray pratie *he* is, upon a ridge like this. But it can't be helped; an' God's will be done! Not himself!—faix, it 's he that 'll get the height of good thratement, an' can ride home, well lined, both inside an' outside. Much good may it do him!—'tis but his right."

The lad now paused in his turn, looked down on Jack Sullivan's comfortable house, sheltered by a clump of trees, and certainly saw such a smoke tossed up from the chimney, as gave unequivocal evidence of preparation for a good dinner. He next looked "behind the wind," with a visage made more blank and meagre by the contrast; after which he reflected for a few minutes, as if working up his mind to some sudden determination. The deliberation, however, was short: he struck his open hand upon the head of the spade with much animation, and instantly took it in both hands, exclaiming:

"Here, father, here goes; to the divil once an' for ever I pitch slavery,"* and as he spoke, the spade was sent as far from him as he had strength

* Toil—labour

to throw it. "To the divil I pitch slavery! An' now, father, wid the help o' God, this is the last day's work I 'll ever put my hand to. There 's no way of larnin' Latin here; but off to Munster I 'll start, an' my face you 'll never see in this parish, till I come home either a priest an' a gintleman! But that 's not all, father dear; I 'll rise you out of your distress, or die in the struggle. I can't bear to see your grey hairs in sorrow and poverty."

"Well, Jimmy—well, agra—God enable you, avourneen; 'tis a good intintion. The divil a one o' me will turn another spadeful aither, for this day: I 'm *dhrookin'* * wid the rain. We 'll go home an' take an air o' the fire—we want it; and aftherwards we can talk about what you 're *on* † for."

It is usual to attribute to the English and Scotch character, exclusively, a cool and persevering energy in the pursuit of such objects as inclination or interest may propose for attainment; whilst Irishmen are considered too much the creatures of impulse to reach a point that requires coolness, condensation of thought, and efforts successively repeated. This is a mistake. It is the opinion of Englishmen and Scotchmen who know not the Irish character thoroughly. The fact is, that in the attainment of an object, where a sad-faced Englishman would despair, an Irishman will, probably, laugh, drink, weep, and fight, during his progress to accomplish it. A Scotchman will miss it, perhaps, but, having done all that could be done, he will try another speculation. The Irishman may miss it too; but to console himself he will break the head of any man who may have impeded him in his efforts, as a proof that he *ought* to have succeeded; or if he cannot manage that point, he will crack the pate of the first man he meets, or he will get drunk, or he will marry a wife, or swear a gauger never to show his face in that quarter again; or he will exclaim, if it be concerning a farm, with a countenance full of simplicity—"God bless your honour, long life and honour to you, Sir! Sure an' 't was but a thrifle, any how, that your Reverence will make up for me another time. An' 'tis well I know your Lordship 'ud be the last man on airth to give me the cowld shoulder, so you would, an' I an ould residenthur on your own father's estate, the Lord be praised for that same! An' 'tis a happiness, an' nothin' else, so it is, even if I payed double rint—wherein, maybe, I 'm not a day's journey from that same, manin' the double rint, yer honour; only that one would do a great deal for the honour an' glory of livin' undher a raal gintleman—an' that 's but rason."

There is, in short, a far-sightedness in an Irishman which is not properly understood, because it is difficult to understand it. I do not think there is a nation on earth, whose inhabitants mix up their interest and their feelings together more happily, shrewdly, and yet less ostensibly, than Irishmen contrive to do. An Irishman will make you laugh at his joke, while the object of that joke is wrapped up from you in the profoundest mystery, and you will consequently make the concession to a certain point of his character, which has been really obtained by a faculty

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* Dripping—very wet. † Determined on.

you had not penetration to discover, or, rather, which he had too much sagacity to exhibit. Of course, as soon as your back is turned, the broad grin is on him, and one of his cheeks is stuck out two inches beyond the other, because his tongue is in it—at your stupidity, simplicity, or folly. Of all the national characters on this habitable globe, I verily believe that that of the Irish is the most profound and unfathomable; and the most difficult on which to form a system, either social, moral, or religious.

It would be difficult, for example, to produce a more signal instance of energy, system, and perseverance than that exhibited in Ireland during the struggle for Emancipation. Was there not flattery to the dust? blarney to the eyes? heads broken? throats cut? houses burned? and cattle houghed? And why? Was it for the *mere pleasure* of blarney —of breaking heads (I won't dispute the last point, though, because I scorn to give up the glory of the national character),—of cutting throats —burning houses—or houghing cattle? No; but to secure Emancipation. In attaining that object was exemplified the Irish method of gaining a point.

"Yes," said Jemmy, "to the divil I pitch slavery! I will come home able to *rise* yez from your poverty, or never show my face in the parish of Ballysogarth agin."

When the lad's determination was mentioned to his mother and the family, there was a loud and serious outcry against it: for no circumstance is relished that ever takes away a member from an Irish hearth, no matter what the nature of that circumstance may be.

"Och, thin, is it for that *bocaun* * of a boy to set off wid himself, runnin' through the wide world afther larnin', widout money or friends! Avourneen, put it out of yer head. No; struggle on as the rest of us is doin', an' maybe ye'll come as well off at the long run."

"Mother dear," said the son, "I wouldn't wish to go agin what you'd say; but I made a promise to myself to *rise* yez out of your poverty if I can, an' my mind's made up on it; so don't cross me, or be the manes of my havin' bad luck on my journey, in regard of me goin' aginst yer will, when you know 'twould be the last thing I'd wish to do."

"Let the gossoon take his way, Vara. Who knows but it was the Almighty put the thoughts of it into his head. Pasthorini says that there will soon be a change, an' 'tis a good skame it 'ill be to have him a *sogarth* when the fat livins will be walkin' back to their ould owners."

"Oh, an' may the Man above grant *that*, I pray Jamini this day! for are n't we harrished out of our lives, scrapin' an' scramblin' for the black thieves, what we ought to put on our backs, an' into our own mouths. Well, they say it's not lucky to take money from a priest, because it's the price o' sin, an' no more it can, seein' that they want it themselves; but I'm sure it's *their* † money that *ought* to carry the bad luck to them, in regard of their gettin' so many bitther curses along wid it."

When a lad from the humblest classes resolves to go to Munster as a poor scholar, there is but one course to be pursued in preparing his outfit. This is by a collection at the chapel among the parishioners, to whom the

* Soft, innocent person. † The Protestant clergy.

matter is made known by the priest, from the altar, some Sunday previous to his departure. Accordingly, when the family had all given their consent to Jemmy's project, his father went, on the following day, to communicate the matter to the priest, and to solicit his co-operation in making a collection in behalf of the lad, on the next Sunday but one: for there is always a week's notice given, and sometimes more, that the people may come prepared.

The conversation already detailed between father and son took place on Friday, and on Saturday, a day on which the priest never holds a Station, and, of course, is generally at home, Dominick M'Evoy went to his house with the object already specified in view. The priest was at home; a truly benevolent man, but like the worthies of his day, not overburthened with learning, though brimful of kindness and hospitality mixed up with drollery and simple cunning.

"Good morning, Dominick!" said the priest, as Dominick entered.

"Good morrow kindly, Sir," replied Dominick: "I hope your Reverence is well, *and* in good health."

"Troth I am, Dominick! I hope there's nothing wrong at home; how is the wife and children?"

"I humbly thank your Reverence for axin'! Troth there's no rason for complainin' in regard o' the health; sarra one o' them but 's bravely, consitherin' all things: I believe I'm the worst o' them, myself, yer Reverence. I'm gettin' ould, you see, an' stiff, an' wake; but that's only in the coorse o' nathur; a man can't last always. Wait till them that's young an' hearty *now*, harrows as much as I ploughed in my day, an' they won't have much to brag of. Why, thin, but yer Reverence stands it bravely—faix, wondherfully itself—the Lord be praised! an' it warms my own heart to see you look so well."

"Thank you, Dominick. Indeed, my health, God be thankied, is very good. Ellish," he added, calling to an old female servant—"you'll take a glass, Dominick, the day is cowldish—Ellish, here take the kay, and get some spirits—the *poteen*, Ellish—to the right hand in the cupboard. Indeed, my health is very good, Dominick. Father Murray says he invies me my appetite, an' I tell him he's guilty of one of the Seven deadly sins."

"Ha, ha, ha!—Faix, an' Invy *is* one o' them sure enough; but a joke is a joke in the mane time. A pleasant gintleman is the same Father Murray, but yer Reverence is too deep for him in the jokin' line, for all that. Ethen, Sir, but it's you that gave ould Cokely the keen cut about his religion—ha, ha, ha! Myself laughed till I was sick for two days afther it—the ould thief!"

"Eh?—Did you hear that, Dominick? Are you sure that's the poteen, Ellish? Ay, an' the best of it all was, that his pathrun, Lord Foxhunter, was present. Come, Dominick, try that—it never seen wather. But the best of it all was—

—"'Well, Father Kavanagh,' said he, 'who put you into the church? Now,' said he, 'you'll come over me wid your regular succession from St. Peter, but I won't allow that.'

"'Why, Mr. Cokely,' says I, back to him, 'I'll give up the succes-

sion;' says I, 'and what is more, I'll grant that *you* have been *called* by the Lord, and that *I* have *not;* but the Lord that called you,' says I, 'was *Lord Foxhunter*.' Man, you'd tie his Lordship *wid* a cobweb, he laughed so heartily."

"'Bravo, Father Kavanagh, said he. 'Cokely, you're *bate*,' said he; 'and upon my honour, you must both dine with me to-day,' says he—and capital claret he keeps."

"Your health, Father Kavanagh, an' God spare you to us! Hah! wather! Oh, the divil a taste itself did the same stuff *see!* Why, thin, I think your Reverence an' me's about an age. I bleeve I'm a thrifle oulder; but I don't bear it so well as you do. The family, you see, an' the childhre, an' the cares o' the world, pull me down: throth, the same family's a throuble to me. I wish I had them all settled safe, any way."

"What do you intind to do with them, Dominick?"

"In throth, that's what brought me to yer Reverence. I've one boy—Jimmy—a smart chap entirely, an' he has taken it into his head to go as a poor scholar to Munster. He's fond o' the larnin', there's not a doubt o' that, an' small blame to him to be sure; but then again, what can I do? He's bint on goin', an' I'm not able to help him, poor fellow, in any shape; so I made bould to see yer Reverence about it, in hopes that you might be able to plan out something for him more betthe nor I could do. I have the good wishes of the neighbours, and indeed of the whole parish, let the thing go as it may."

"I know that, Dominick, and for the same rason we'll have a collection at the three althars. I'll mintion it to them after Mass to-morrow, and let them be prepared for Sunday week, when we can make the collection. Hut, man, never fear; we'll get as much as will send him halfway to the priesthood; and I'll tell you what, Dominick, I'll never be the man to refuse giving him a couple of guineas myself."

"May the heavenly Father bless an' keep your Reverence. I'm sure 'tis a good right the boy has, as well as all of us, to never forget your kindness. But as to the money—he'll be proud of your assistance the other way, Sir—so not a penny—'tis only your good-will we want—hem—except indeed, that you'd wish yourself to make a piece of kindness of it to the poor boy. Oh, not a drop more, Sir—I declare it'll be apt to get into my head. Well, well—sure an' we're not to disobey our clargy, whether or not: so here's your health over agin, your Reverence! an' success to the poor child that's bint on good!"

"Two guineas his Reverence is to give you from himself, Jimmy," said the father, on relating the success of this interview with the priest;" an' faix I was widin one of refusin' it, for feard it might bring something *unlucky** wid it; but, thought I, on the spur, it's best to take it, any way. We can asily put it off on some o' these black-mouthed Presbyterians or Orangemen, by way of changin' it, an' if there's any hard fortune in it, let them have the full benefit of it, *ershi misha*."†

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* There is a superstitious belief in some parts of Ireland, that priest's money is unlucky; "because," say the people, "it is the price of sin"—alluding to absolution.

† Say I.

It is by trifles of this nature that the unreasonable though enduring hatred with which the religious sects of Ireland look upon those of a different creed is best known. This feeling, however, is sufficiently mutual. Yet on both sides there is something more speculative than practical in its nature. When they speak of each other as a distinct class, the animosity, though abstracted, appears to be most deep; but when they mingle in the necessary intercourse of life, it is curious to see them frequently descend, on both sides, from the general rule to those exceptions of good-will and kindness, which natural benevolence and mutual obligation, together with a correct knowledge of each other's real characters, frequently produce. Even this abstracted hatred, however, has been the curse of our unhappy country; it has kept us too much asunder, or when we met, exhibited us to each other in our darkest and most offensive aspects.

Dominick's conduct in the matter of the priest's money was also a happy illustration of that mixture of simplicity and shrewdness with which an Irishman can frequently make points meet, which superstition, alone, without such ingenuity, would keep separate for ever. Many another man might have refused the money from an ignorant dread of its proving *unlucky;* but his mode of reasoning on the subject was satisfactory to himself, and certainly the most ingenious which, according to his belief, he could have adopted,—that of foisting it upon a heretic.

The eloquence of a country priest, though rude, and by no means elevated, is sometimes well adapted to the end in view, to the feelings of his auditory, and to the nature of the subject on which he speaks. Pathos and humour are the two levers by which the Irish character is raised or depressed; and these are blended in a manner too anomalous to be ever properly described. Whoever could be present at a sermon on the Sunday when a Purgatorian Society is to be established, would hear pathos and see grief of the first water. It is then he would get a "nate" and glowing description of Purgatory, and see the broad, humorous, Milesian faces, of three or four thousand persons of both sexes, shaped into an expression of the most grotesque and clamorous grief. The priest, however, on particular occasions of this nature, very shrewdly gives notice of the sermon, and of the purpose for which it is to be preached: —if it be grave, the people are prepared to cry; but if it be for a political, or any other purpose not decidedly religious, there will be abundance of that rough, blunt satire and mirth, so keenly relished by the peasantry, illustrated, too, by the most comical and ridiculous allusions. That priest, indeed, who is the best master of this latter faculty is uniformly the greatest favourite. It is no unfrequent thing to see the majority of an Irish congregation drowned in sorrow and tears, even when they are utterly ignorant of the language spoken; particularly in those districts where the Irish is still the vernacular tongue. This is what renders notice of the sermon and its purport necessary; otherwise the honest people might be seriously at a loss whether to laugh or cry.

"*Ellish, avourneen, gho dhe dirsha?*"—Ellish, my dear, what is he saying?"

"*Och, musha niel eshighum, ahagur—ta sha er Purgathor, ta barlhum.*" —Och, I dunna that, jewel; I blieve he 's on Purgatory."

" *Och, och, oh—och, och, oh—oh, i, oh, i, oh!*"

And on understanding that Purgatory is the subject, they commence their grief with a rocking motion, wringing their hands, and unconsciously passing their beads through their fingers, whilst their bodies are bent forward towards the earth.

On the contrary, when the priest gets jocular—which I should have premised, he never does in what is announced as a solemn sermon—you might observe several faces charged with mirth and laughter, turned, even while beaming with this expression, to those who kneel beside them, inquiring:

" Arrah, Barny, what is it—ha, ha, ha!—what is it he's sayin'? The Lord spare him among us, any how, the darlin' of a man! Eh, Barny, you that's in the inside the English?" This, of course, is spoken in Irish.

Barny, however, is generally too much absorbed in the fun to become interpreter just then; but as soon as the joke is nearly heard out, in compliance with the importunity of his neighbours, he gives them a brief hint or two, and instantly the full chorus is rung out, long, loud, and jocular.

On the Sunday in question, as the subject could not be called strictly religious, the priest, who knew that a joke or two would bring in many an additional crown to Jemmy's *caubeen* *, was determined that they should at least have a laugh for their money. The man, besides, was benevolent, and knew the way to the Irish heart; a knowledge which he felt happy in turning to the benefit of the lad in question.

With this object in view, he addressed the people somewhat in the following language:

" *Blessed is he that giveth his money to him that standeth in need of it.*

" These words, my brethren, are taken from St. Paul, who, among ourselves, knew the value of a friend in distress as well as any other apostle in the three kingdoms—hem. It's a nate text, my friends, any how. He manes, however, when we have it to give, my own true, well-tried, ould friends!—when we have it to give. Its absence althers the case, in toto; because you have all heard the proverb—' there is no takin' money out of an empty purse;' or, as an ould ancient author said long ago upon the same subject:

' Cantabit whackuus coram lathrone whiathur!'

—(Dshk, dshk, dshk†—that's the larnin'!)—He that carries an empty purse may fwhistle at the thief. It's *sing* in the Latin; but sing or fwhistle, in my opinion, he that goes wid an empty purse seldom sings or fwhistles to a pleasant tune. Melancholy music I'd call it, an' wouldn't, may be, much astray afther.—Hem. At all evints, may none of this present congregation, whin at their devotions, ever sing or fwhistle to the same tune! No; let it be to ' money in both pockets,' if you sing at all; and as long as you have that, never fear but you'll also have the ' priest in his boots' into the bargain—(" Ha, ha, ha!—God bless him,

* Such collections were generally made in hats—the usual name for an Irish peasant's hat being *caubeen*.

† This sound, which expresses wonder, is produced by striking the tip of the tongue against the palate.

isn't he the pleasant gentleman, all out—ha, ha, ha!—moreover, an' by the same a token, it's thrue as Gospel, so it is,")—for well I know that you're the high-spirited people, who wouldn't see your priest without them, while a fat parson, with half-a-dozen chins upon him, red and rosy, goes about every day in the week bogged in boots, like a horse-trooper! —(Ha, ha, ha!—good, Father Dan! More power to you—ha, ha, ha! We're the boys that wouldn't see you in want o' them, sure enough. Isn't he the droll crathur?")

"But suppose a man hasn't money, what is he to do? Now this divides itself into what is called Hydrostatics an' Metaphuysics, and must be proved logically in the following manner:

"First, we suppose him *not* to have the money—there I may be wrong or I may be right; now for the illustration and the logic.

"Pether Donovan."

"Here, your Reverence."

"Now, Pether, if I suppose you to have *no* money, am I right, or am I wrong?"

"Why, thin, I'd be sarry to prove your Reverence to be wrong, so I would; but, for all that, I believe I must give it aginst you."

"How much have you got, Pether?"

"Ethen, but 'tis yer Reverence that's comin' close upon me; two or three small notes an' some silver."

"How much silver, Pether?"

"I'll tell your Reverence in a jiffy. I ought to have a ten shillin', barrin' the price of a quarther o' tobaccy that I bought at the crass-roads beyant. Nine shillins an' some hapuns, yer Reverence."

"Very good, Pether, you must hand me the silver, till I give the rest of the illustration wid it."

"But does yer Reverence mind another ould proverb?—'a fool an' his money's asy parted.' Sure an' I know you're goin' to do a joke upon me."

("Give him the money, Pether," from a hundred voices—"give his Reverence the money, you nager you—give him the silver, you dirty spalpeen you—hand it out, you misert.")

"Pether, if you don't give it dacently, I'll not take it; and in that case—"

"Here, here, your Reverence—here it is; sure I wouldn't have your ill-will for all I'm worth."

"Why, you nager, if I wasn't the first orathor livin', barrin' Cicero or Demosthenes himself, I couldn't *schrew* a penny out o' you! Now, Pether, there's a specimen of logic for you; an' if it wasn't good, depind upon it the money would be in your pocket still. I've never known you to give a penny for any charitable purpose, since ever I saw your face: but I'm doin' a good action in your behalf for once; so if you have any movin' words to say to the money in question, say them, for you'll never finger it more."

A burst of the most uproarious mirth followed this manœuvre, in which the simple priest himself joined heartily; whilst the melancholy of Peter's face was ludicrously contrasted with the glee which characterised those that surrounded him.

"Hem!—Secondly—A man, you see, may nave money, or he may not, when his fellow-creature who stands in need of it makes an appale to his dacency and his feelings; and sorry I'd be to think that there's a man before me, or a woman either, who'd refuse to assist the distresses of any one, of any creed, church, or persuasion, whether white, black, or yallow —no; I don't except even the bluebellies themselves. It's what I never taught you, nor never will tache you to the day of my death! To be sure, a fellow-creature may say, 'help me, my brother, I am distressed,' or, 'I am bent on a good purpose, that your kindness can enable me to accomplish.' But suppose that you have not the money *about you at the time*, wouldn't you feel sorry to the back-bone? Ay, would yez—to the very core of the heart itself. Or if any man—an' he'd be nothing else than a *bodagh* that would say it—if any man would tell me that you would not, I'd—yes—I'd give him his answer, as good as I gave to ould Cokely long ago, and you all know what that was."

"The next point is, what would you do if you hadn't it about you? It's I that can tell you what you'd do:—you'd say, 'I haven't got it, brother,'—for ev'ry created bein' of the human kind is your brother, barrin' the women, an' they are your sisters—[this produced a grin upon many faces]—'but,' says you, 'if you wait a bit for a day or two, or a week, or maybe for a fortnight, I'll try what I can do to help you.'

"Picture to yourselves a fellow-creature in distress—suppose him to have neither hat, shoe, nor stocking—[this was a touch of the pathetic] —and altogether in a state of utter destitution! Can there be a more melancholy picture than this? No, there can't. But 'tisn't the tithe of it!—a barefaced robbery is the same tithe—think of him without father, mother, or friend upon the earth—both dead, and ne'er another to be had for love or money—maybe he has poor health—maybe he's sick, an' in a sthrange country—[here Jemmy's mother and friends sobbed aloud, and the contagion began to spread—the priest, in fact, knew where to touch]—his face is pale—his eyes sunk with sickness and sorrow in his head—his bones are cuttin' the skin—he knows not where to turn himself—hunger and sickness are strivin' for him.—[Here the grief became loud and general, and even the good-natured preacher's own voice got somewhat unsteady.]—He's in a bad state entirely—miserable! more miserable!! most miserable!!! [och, och, oh!] sick, sore, and sorry!—he's to be pitied, felt for, and compassionated!—[a general outcry]—'tis a faver he has, or an ague, maybe, or a rheumatism, or an embargo* on the limbs, or the king's evil, or a consumption, or a decline, or God knows but it's the falling-sickness—[och, och, oh!—och, och, oh! from the whole congregation, whilst the simple old man's eyes were blinded with tears at the force of the picture he drew.]—Ay, maybe it's the *falling*-sickness, and in that case how on earth can he *stand* it.—[He can't, he can't, wurra strew, wurra strew!—och, och, oh!—ogh, ogh, ogh!]—The Lord in heaven look down upon him—[amin, amin, this blessed an' holy Sunday that's in it!—och, oh!]—pity him—[amin, amin!—och, och, an' amin'!]—with miseracordial feeling and benediction! He hasn't a rap in his company!—moneyless, friendless, houseless,

* Lumbago, we presume.

an' homeless ! Ay, my friends, you all have homes—but *he* has none ! Thrust back by every hard-hearted spalpeen, and he, maybe, a better father's son than the Turk that refuses him ! Look at your own childre, my friends ! Bring the case home to yourselves ! Suppose he was one of them—alone on the earth, and none to pity him in his sorrows ! Your own childre, I say, in a strange land.—[Here the outcry became astounding; men, women, and children in one general uproar of grief.]—An' this may all be Jemmy M'Evoy's case, that's going in a week or two to Munster, as a poor scholar—may be his case, I say, except you befriend him, and show your *dacency* and your *feelings*, like Christians and Catholics; and for either dacency or kindness, I'd turn yez against any other congregation in the diocess, or in the kingdom—ay, or against Dublin itself, if it was convanient, or in the neighbourhood."

Now here was a *coup de main*—not a syllable mentioned about Jemmy M'Evoy, until he had melted them down, ready for the impression, which he accordingly made to his heart's content.

"Ay," he went on, "an' 'tis the parish of Ballysogarth that has the name, far and near, for *both*, and well they desarve it. You won't see the poor gorsoon go to a sthrange country with empty pockets. He's the son of an honest man—one of yourselves; and although he's a poor man, you know 't was *Yallow Sam* that made him so—that put him out of his comfortable farm and slipped a *black-mouth** into it. You won't turn your backs on the son in regard of *that*, any way. As for Sam, let *him* pass; he'll not grind the poor nor truckle to the rich, when he gives up his stewardship in the kingdom come. Lave him to the friend of the poor—to his God; but the son of them that he oppressed, you will stand up for. He's going to Munster, to learn 'to go upon the Mission;' and, on Sunday next, there will be a collection made here, and at the other two althars for him; and, as your own characters are at stake, I trust it will be neither mane nor shabby. There will be Protestants here, I'll engage, and you must act dacently before them, if it was only to set them a good example. And now I'll tell yez a story that the mintion of the Protestants brings to my mind :—

"There was, you see, a Protestmant man and a Catholic woman once married together. The man was a swearing, drinking, wicked rascal, and his wife the same: between them they were a blessed pair to be sure. She never bent her knee under a priest until she was on her deathbed; nor was he known ever to enter a church door, or to give a shilling in charity but once, that being as follows:—He was passing a Catholic place of worship one Sunday, on his way to fowl—for he had his dog and gun with him;—'t was beside a road, and many of the congregation were kneeling out across the way. Just as he passed they were making a collection for a poor scholar—and surely they that love the larning desarve to be encouraged! Well, behold you, says one of them, 'will you remember the poor scholar,' says he, 'and put something in the hat? You don't know,' says he, 'but his prayers will be before you.'† 'True enough, maybe,' says the man, 'and there's a crown to him, for God's sake.' Well and good; the man died, and so did the wife: but the very

* In the north of Ireland the word blackmouth means a Presbyterian.

† In the other world.

day before her departure, she got a scapular, and died in it. She had one sister, however, a good crature, that did nothing but fast and pray, and make her sowl. This woman had strong doubts upon her mind, and was very much troubled as to whether or not her sister went to heaven; and she begged it as a favour from the blessed Virgin, that the state of her sister's sowl might be revaled to her. Her prayer was granted. One night, about a week after her death, her sister came back to her, dressed all in white, and circled round by a veil of glory.

"'Is that Mary?' said the living sister.

"'It is,' said the other; 'I have got liberty to appear to you,' says she, 'and to tell you that I'm happy.'

"'May the holy Virgin be praised!' said the other. 'Mary, dear, you have taken a great weight off of me,' says she: 'I thought you'd have a bad chance, in regard of the life you led.'

"'When I died,' said the spirit, 'and was on my way to the other world, I came to a place where the road divided itself into three parts;—one to heaven, another to hell, and a third to purgatory. There was a dark gulf between me and heaven, and a breach between me and purgatory that I couldn't step across, and if I had missed my foot there, I would have dropped into hell. So I would, too, only that the blessed Virgin put my own scapular over the breach, and it became firm, and I stepped on it, and got over. The Virgin then desired me to look into hell, and the first person I saw was my own husband, standing with a green sod under his feet! "He got that favour," said the blessed Virgin, "in consequence of the prayers of a holy priest, that had once been a poor scholar, that he gave assistance to, at a collection made for him in such a chapel," says she. Then,' continued the sowl, 'Mary,' says she, 'but there's some great change in the world since I died, or why would the people live so long? It can't be less than six thousand years since I departed, and yet I find every one of my friends just as I left them.'

"'Why,' replied the living sister, 'you're only six days dead.'

"'Ah, avourneen!' said the other, 'it can't be—it can't be! for I have been thousands on thousands of years in pain!'—and as she spoke this she disappeared.

"Now there's a *proof* of the pains of purgatory, where one day seems as long as a thousand years; and you know we oughtn't to grudge a thrifle to a fellow-crature, that *we* may avoid it. So you see, my friends, there's nothing like good works. You know not when or where this lad's prayers may benefit you. If he gets ordained, the first mass he says will be for his benefactors; and in every one he celebrates after that, they must also be remembered: the words are—*pro omnibus benefactoribus meis, per omnia secula seculorum!*

"Thirdly—hem—I now lave the thing to yourselves.

"But wasn't I a match for Pether Donovan, that would brake a stone for the marrow*—Eh?—(a broad laugh at Pether's rueful visage.)—

* I know not whether this may be considered worthy of a note or not. I have myself frequently seen and tasted what is appropriately termed by the peasantry "Stone Marrow."

Pether, you Turk, will your heart never soften—will you never have dacency, an' you the only man of your family that's so? Sure they say you 're going to be marrid some of these days. Well, if you get your wife in my parish, I tell you, Pether, I'll give you a fleecin', for don't think I'll marry you as chape as I would a poor honest man. I'll make you shell out the yallowboys, and 'tis that will go to your heart, you nager you; and then I'll eat you out of house and home at the Stations. May the Lord grant us, in the mane time, a dacent appetite, a blessing which I wish you all,——&c."

At this moment the congregation was once more in convulsions of laughter at the dressing which Peter, whose character was drawn with much truth and humour, received at the hands of the worthy pastor.

Our readers will perceive that there was not a single prejudice, or weakness, or virtue, in the disposition of his auditory, left untouched in this address. He moved their superstition, their pride of character, their dread of hell and purgatory, their detestation of yellow Sam, and the remembrance of the injury so wantonly inflicted on M'Evoy's family; he glanced at the advantage to be derived from the lad's prayers, the example they should set to Protestants, made a passing hit at tithes; and indulged in the humorous, the pathetic, and the miraculous. In short, he left no avenue to their hearts untouched; and in the process by which he attempted to accomplish his object he was successful.

There is, in fact, much rude, unpolished eloquence among the Roman Catholic priesthood, and not a little which, if duly cultivated by study and a more liberal education, would deserve to be ranked very high.

We do not give this as a specimen of their *modern* pulpit eloquence, but as a sample of that in which some of those Irish clergy shone, who, before the establishment of Maynooth, were admitted to orders immediately from the hedge-schools, in consequence of the dearth of priests which then existed in Ireland. It was customary in those days to ordain them even before they departed for the continental colleges, in order that they might, by saying masses and performing other clerical duties, be enabled to add something to the scanty pittance which was appropriated to their support. Of the class to which Father Kavanagh belonged, there are few, if any, remaining. They sometimes were called "Hedge-priests,"* by way of reproach; though for our own parts, we wish their non-interference in politics, unaffected piety, and simplicity of character, had remained behind them.

On the Sunday following, Dominick M'Evoy and his son Jemmy attended mass, whilst the other members of the family, with that sense

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It is found in the heart of a kind of soft granite, or perhaps I should rather say freestone. The country people use it medicinally, but I cannot remember what particular disease it is said to cure. It is a soft saponaceous substance, not unpleasant to the taste, of a bluish colour, and melts in the mouth, like the fat of cold meat, leaving the palate greasy. How far an investigation into its nature and properties might be useful to the geologist or physician, it is not for me to conjecture. As the fact appeared to be a curious one, and necessary, moreover, to illustrate the expression used in the text, I thought it not amiss to mention it. It may be a *bonne bouche* for the geologists.

* This nickname was first bestowed upon them by the continental priests, who generally ridiculed them for their vulgarity. They were, for the most part, simple but worthy men.

of honest pride which is more strongly inherent in Irish character than is generally supposed, remained at home, from a reluctance to witness what they could not but consider a degradation. This decency of feeling was anticipated by the priest, and not overlooked by the people; for the former, the reader may have observed, in the whole course of his address never once mentioned the word "charity;" nor did the latter permit the circumstance to go without its reward, according to the best of their ability. So keen and delicate are the perceptions of the Irish, and so acutely alive are they to those nice distinctions of kindness and courtesy, which have in their hearts a spontaneous and sturdy growth, that mocks at the stunted virtues of artificial life.

In the parish of Ballysogarth there were three altars, or places of Roman Catholic worship; and the reader may suppose that the collection made at each place was considerable. In truth, both father and son's anticipations were far under the sum collected. Protestants and Presbyterians attended with their contributions, and those of the latter who scrupled to be present at what they considered to be an idolatrous worship, did not hesitate to *send* their quota by some Roman Catholic neighbour.

Their names were accordingly announced with an encomium from the priest, which never failed to excite a warm-hearted murmur of approbation. Nor was this feeling transient, for, we will venture to say, that had political excitement flamed up even to rebellion and mutual slaughter, the persons and property of *those* individuals would have been held sacred.

At length Jemmy was equipped; and sad and heavy became the hearts of his parents and immediate relations as the morning appointed for his departure drew nigh. On the evening before, several of his more distant relatives came to take their farewell of him, and, in compliance with the usages of Irish hospitality, they were detained for the night. They did not, however, come empty-handed: some brought money; some brought linen, stockings, or small presents—"jist, Jimmy asthore, to keep *me* in yer memory, sure,—and nothin' else it is for, mavourneen."

Except Jemmy himself, and one of his brothers who was to accompany him part of the way, none of the family slept. The mother exhibited deep sorrow, and Dominick, although he made a show of firmness, felt, now that the crisis was at hand, nearly incapable of parting with the boy. The conversation of their friends and the cheering effects of the poteen, enabled them to sustain his loss better than they otherwise would have done, and the hope of seeing him one day "an ordained priest," contributed more than either to support them.

When the night was nearly half spent, the mother took a candle and privately withdrew to the room in which the boy slept. The youth was fair, and interesting to look upon—the clustering locks of his white forehead were divided; yet there was on his otherwise open brow, a shade of sorrow, produced by the coming separation, which even sleep could not efface. The mother held the candle gently towards his face, shading it with one hand, lest the light might suddenly awake him; she then surveyed his features long and affectionately, whilst the tears fell in showers from her cheeks.

"There you lie," she softly sobbed out, in Irish, "the sweet pulse of your mother's heart; the flower of our flock, the pride of our eyes, and the music of our hearth! Jimmy, avourneen machree, an' how can I part wid you, my darlin' son! Sure, when I look at your mild face, and think that you're takin' the world on your head to *rise* us out of our poverty, isn't my heart brakin'! A lonely house we 'll have afther you, acushla! Goin' out and comin' in, at home or abroad, your voice won't be in my ears, nor your eye smilin' upon me; An' thin to think of what you may suffer in a sthrange land! If your head aches, on what tendher breast will it lie? or who will bind the ribbon of comfort* round it? or wipe your fair mild brow in sickness? Oh, Blessed Mother!—hunger, sickness, and sorrow may come upon you *when you 'll be far from your own, an' from them that loves you!*"

This melancholy picture was too much for the tenderness of the mother; she sat down beside the bed, rested her face on her open hand, and wept in subdued but bitter grief. At this moment his father, who probably suspected the cause of her absence, came in and perceived her distress.

"Vara," said he, in Irish also, "is my darlin' son asleep?"

She looked up, with streaming eyes, as he spoke, and replied to him in a manner so exquisitely affecting, when the circumstances of the boy, and the tender allusion made by the sorrowing mother, are considered—that in point of fact no heart—certainly no Irish heart—could withstand it. There is an old Irish melody unsurpassed in pathos, simplicity, and beauty—named in Irish "Tha ma machulla 's na foscal me,"—or in English, "I am asleep, and don't waken me." The position of the boy caused the recollection of the old melody to flash into the mother's heart,—she simply pointed to him as the words streamed in a low melodious murmur, but one full of heartrending sorrow, from her lips. The old sacred association—for it was one which she had sung for him a thousand times,—until warned to desist by his tears—deepened the tenderness of her heart, and she said with difficulty, whilst she involuntarily held over the candle to gratify the father's heart by a sight of him.

"I was keepin' him before my eye," she said; "God knows but it may be the last night we 'll ever see him undher our own roof! Dominick, achora, I doubt I can't part wid him from my heart."

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* The following quotation taken from a sketch called "The Irish Midwife," by the author, gives an illustration of this passage:—"The first, meaning pain in the head, she cures by a very formal and serious process called 'measuring the head.' This is done by a ribbon, which she puts round the cranium, repeating during the admeasurement a certain prayer or charm from which the operation is to derive its whole efficacy. The measuring is performed twice—in the first instance, to show that its sutures are separated by disease, or, to speak more plainly, that the bones of the head are absolutely opened, and that as a natural consequence the head must be much larger than when the patient is in a state of health. The circumference of the first admeasurement is marked upon a ribbon, after which she repeats the charm that is to remove the headache, and measures the cranium again, in order to show, by a comparison of the two ribbons, that the sutures have been closed, the charm successful, and the headache immediately removed. It is impossible to say how the discrepancy in the measurement is brought about; but be that as it may, the writer of this has frequently seen the operation performed in such a way as to defy the most scrutinising eye to detect any appearance of imposture, and he is convinced that in the majority of cases there is not the slightest imposture intended. The operator is in truth a dupe to a strong and delusive enthusiasm."

"Then how can I, Vara?" he replied. "Wasn't he my right hand in everything? When was he from me, ever since he took a man's work upon him? And when he'd finish his own task for the day, how kindly he'd begin an' help me wid mine! No, Vara, it goes to my heart to let him go away upon sich a plan, and I wish he hadn't taken the notion into his head at all."

"It's not too late, maybe," replied his mother: "I think it wouldn't be hard to put him off of it; the crathur's own heart is failin' him to lave us. He has sorrow upon his face where he lies."

The father looked at the expression of affectionate melancholy which shaded his features as he slept; and the perception of the boy's internal struggle against his own domestic attachments in accomplishing his first determination, powerfully touched his heart.

"Vara," said he, "I know the boy—he won't give it up; and 't would be a pity—maybe a sin—to put him from it. Let the child get fair play, and thry his coorse. If he fails, he can come back to us, an' our arms an' hearts will be open to welcome him! But, if God prospers him, wouldn't it be a blessin' that we never expected, to see him in the white robes, celebratin' one mass for his paarents. If these ould eyes could see that, I would be continted to close them in pace an' happiness for ever."

"An' well you'd become them, avourneen machree! Well would your mild and handsome countenance look wid the long heavenly stole of innocence upon you! and although it's atin' into my heart, I'll bear it for the sake of seein' the same blessed sight. Look at that face, Dominick; mightn't many a lord of the land be proud to have sich a son? May the heavens shower down its blessin' upon him!"

The father burst into tears. "It is—it is!" said he. "It is the face that 'ud make many a noble heart proud to look at it! Is it any wondher it 'ud cut *our* hearts, thin, to have it taken from afore our eyes? Come away, Vara, come away, or I'll not be able to part wid it. It *is* the lovely face—an' kind is the heart of my darlin' child!" As he spoke, he stooped down and kissed the youth's cheek, on which the warm tears of affection fell, soft as the dew from heaven. The mother followed his example, and they both left the room.

"We must bear it," said Dominick, as they passed into another apartment; "the money's gathered, an' it wouldn't look well to be goin' back wid it to them that befrinded us. *We'd* have the blush upon our face for it, an' the child no advantage."

"Thrue for you, Dominick; and we must make up our minds to live widout him for a while."

The following morning was dark and cloudy, but calm and without rain. When the family were all assembled, every member of it evinced traces of deep feeling, and every eye was fixed upon the serene but melancholy countenance of the boy with tenderness and sorrow. He himself maintained a quiet equanimity, which, though apparently liable to be broken by the struggles of domestic affection, and in character with his meek and unassuming disposition, yet was supported by more firmness than might be expected from a mind in which kindness and sensibility were so strongly predominant. At this time, however, his character

was not developed, or at least not understood, by those that surrounded him. To strong feelings and enduring affections, he added a keenness of perception and a bitterness of invective, of which, in his conversation with his father concerning Yellow Sam, the reader has already had sufficient proofs. At breakfast little or nothing was eaten; the boy himself could not taste a morsel, nor any other person in the family. When the form of the meal was over, the father knelt down—"It 's right," said he, "that we should all go to our knees, and join in a Rosary in behalf of the child that 's goin' on a good intintion. He won't thrive the worse bekase the last words that he 'll hear from his father and mother's lips is a prayer for bringin' the blessin' of God down upon his endayvours."

This was accordingly performed, though not without tears and sobs, and frequent demonstrations of grief; for religion among the peasantry is often associated with bursts of deep and powerful feeling.

When the prayer was over, the boy rose and calmly strapped to his back a satchel covered with deer-skin, containing a few books, linen, and a change of very plain apparel. While engaged in this, the uproar of grief in the house was perfectly heart-rending. When just ready to set out, he reverently took off his hat, knelt down, and with tears streaming from his eyes, craved humbly and meekly the blessing and forgiveness of his father and mother. The mother caught him in her arms, kissed his lips, and kneeling also, sobbed out a fervent benediction upon his head; the father now, in the grief of a strong man, pressed him to his heart, until the big burning tears fell upon the boy's face; his brothers and sisters embraced him wildly; next his more distant relations; and lastly, the neighbours who were crowded about the door. After this he took a light staff in his hand, and, first blessing himself after the form of his church, proceeded to a strange land in quest of education.

He had not gone more than a few perches from the door, when his mother followed him with a small bottle of holy water. "Jimmy, *a lanna voght*,"* said she, "here 's this, an' carry it about you—it will keep evil from you; an' be sure to take good care of the written correckther you got from the priest an' Square Benson; an', darlin', don 't be lookin' too often at the cuff o' your coat, for feard the people might get a notion that you have the bank-notes sewed in it. An', Jimmy agra, don 't be too lavish upon their Munster crame, they say it 's apt to give people the ague. Kiss me agin, agra; an' the heavens above keep you safe and well till we see you once more!"

She then tenderly, and still with melancholy pride, settled his shirt collar, which she thought did not sit well about his neck: and kissing him again, with renewed sorrow left him to pursue his journey.

M'Evoy's house was situated on the side of a dark hill—one of that barren description which can be called neither inland nor mountain. It commanded a wide and extended prospect, and the road along which the lad travelled was visible for a considerable distance from it. On a small hillock before the door, sat Dominick and his wife, who, as long as their son was visible, kept their eyes, which were nearly blinded with tears,

* My poor child.

rivetted upon his person. It was now they gave full vent to their grief, and discussed with painful and melancholy satisfaction, all the excellent qualities which he possessed. As James himself advanced, one neighbour after another fell away from the train which accompanied him, not, however, until they had affectionately embraced and bid him adieu, and, perhaps, slipped with peculiar delicacy an additional mite into his waistcoat pocket. After the neighbours, then followed the gradual separation from his friends—one by one left him, as in the great journey of life, and in a few hours he found himself accompanied only by his favourite brother.

This to him was the greatest trial he had yet felt; long and heart-rending was their embrace. Jemmy soothed and comforted his beloved brother, but in vain. The lad threw himself on the spot at which they parted, and remained there until Jemmy turned an angle of the road which brought him out of his sight, when the poor boy kissed the marks of his brother's feet repeatedly, and then returned home, hoarse and broken down with the violence of his grief.

He was now alone, and for the first time, felt keenly the strange object on which he was bent, together with all the difficulties connected with its attainment. He was young and uneducated, and many years, he knew, must elapse e'er he could find himself in possession of his wishes. But time would pass at home, as well as abroad, he thought; and as there lay no impediment of peculiar difficulty in his way, he collected all his firmness and proceeded.

There is no country on the earth in which either education, or the desire to procure it, is so much reverenced as in Ireland. Next to the claims of the priest and schoolmaster come those of the poor scholar for the respect of the people. It matters not how poor or how miserable he may be; so long as they see him struggling with poverty in the prosecution of a purpose so laudable, they will treat him with attention and kindness. Here there is no danger of his being sent to the workhouse, committed as a vagrant—or passed from parish to parish, until he reaches his own settlement. Here the humble lad is not met by the sneer of purse-proud insolence, or his simple tale answered only by the frown of heartless contempt. No—no—no. The best bit and sup are placed before him; and whilst his poor, but warm-hearted entertainer can afford only potatoes and salt to his own half-starved family, he will make a struggle to procure something better for the poor scholar; "*Bekase he 's far from his own, the crathur!* An' sure the intintion in him is good, any how; the Lord prosper him, an' every one that has the heart set upon the larnin'!"

As Jemmy proceeded, he found that his satchel of books and apparel gave as clear an intimation of his purpose, as if he had carried a label to that effect upon his back.

"God save you, a bouchal!" said a warm, honest-looking countryman, whom he met driving home his cows in the evening, within a few miles of the town in which he purposed to sleep.

"God save you kindly!"

"Why, thin, 'tis a long journey you have before you, alanna, for I know well it's for Munster you're bound."

"Thrue for you, 'tis there wid the help of God I'm goin'. A great scarcity of larnin' was in my own place, or I wouldn't have to go at all," said the boy, whilst his eyes filled with tears.

"'Tis no discredit in life," replied the countryman, with untaught natural delicacy, for he perceived that a sense of pride lingered about the boy, which made the character of poor scholar sit painfully upon him; "'tis no discredit, dear, nor don't be cast down. I'll warrant you that God will prosper you; an' that he may, avick, I pray this day!" and as he spoke, he raised his hat in reverence to the Being whom he invoked. "An' tell me, dear—where do you intend to sleep to-night?"

"In the town forrid here," replied Jemmy. "I'm in hopes I'll be able to reach it before dark."

"Pooh! asy you will. Have you any friends or acquaintances there that 'ud welcome you, *a bouchal dhas* (my handsome boy)?"

"No, indeed," said Jemmy, "they're all strangers to me; but I can stop in 'dhry lodgin',' for it's chaper."

"Well, alanna, I believe you; but *I'm no stranger to you*—so come home wid me to-night; where you'll get a good bed, an betther thratement nor in any of their dhry lodgins. Give me your books, an' I'll carry them for you. Ethen, but you have a great batch o' them entirely. Can you make any hand o' the Latin at all yet?"

"No, indeed," replied Jemmy, somewhat sorrowfully; "I didn't ever open a Latin book, at all at all."

"Well, acushla, everything has a beginnin';—you won't be so. An' I know by your face that you'll be bright at it, an' a credit to them that owes * you. There's my house in the fields beyant, where you'll be well kept for one night, any way, or for twinty, or for ten times twinty, if you wanted them."

The honest farmer then commenced the song of *Colleen dhas Crotha na Mho* †, which he sang in a clear mellow voice, until they reached the house.

"Alley," said the man to his wife, on entering, "here's a stranger I've brought you."

"Well," replied Alley, "he's welcome sure, any way; *Kead millia failta ghud*, alanna! sit over to the fire. Brian, get up, dear," said she to one of the children, "an' let the stranger to the hob."

"He's goin' on a good errand, the Lord bless him!" said the husband, "up the country for the larnin'. Put thim books over on the settle; an' whin the *girshas* are done milkin', give him a brave dhrink of the sweet milk; it's the stuff to thravel on."

"Throth, an' I will, wid a heart an' a half, wishin' it was betther I had to give him. Here, Nelly, put down a pot o' wather, an' lave soap an' a *praskeen*, afore you go to milk, till I bathe the dacent boy's feet. Sore an' tired they are afther his journey, poor young crathur."

When Jemmy placed himself upon the hob, he saw that some peculiarly good fortune had conducted him to so comfortable a resting-place. He considered this as a good omen, and felt, in fact, much relieved, for the sense of loneliness among strangers was removed.

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* Owns. † The pretty girl milking her cow.

The house evidently belonged to a wealthy farmer, well to do in the world; the chimney was studded with sides upon sides of yellow smoke-dried bacon, hams, and hung beef in abundance. The kitchen tables were large, and white as milk; and the dresser rich in its shining array of delf and pewter. Everything, in fact, was upon a large scale. Huge meal chests were ranged on one side, and two or three settle beds on the other, conspicuous, as I have said, for their uncommon cleanliness; whilst hung from the ceiling were the *glaiks*, a machine for churning; and beside the dresser stood an immense churn, certainly too unwieldy to be managed except by machinery. The farmer was a ruddy-faced Milesian, who wore a drab frieze coat, with a velvet collar, buff waistcoat, corduroy small-clothes, and top-boots well greased from the tops down *. He was not only an agriculturist, but a grazier—remarkable for shrewdness and good sense, generally attended fairs and markets, and brought three or four large droves of fat cattle to England every year. From his fob hung the brass chain and almost rusty key of a watch, which he kept certainly more for use than ornament.

"A little sup o' this," said he, "won't take your life," approaching Jemmy with a bottle of as good poteen as ever escaped the eye of an exciseman; "it 'll refresh you—for you 're tired, or I wouldn't offer it, by rason that one bint on what you're bint on, oughtn't to be makin' freedoms wid the same dhrink. But there's a time for every thing, an' there's a time for this.——Thank you, agra," he added, in reply to Jemmy, who had drunk his health. "Now, don't be frettin'—but make yourself as aisy as if you were at your own father's hearth. You'll have everything to your heart's contint for this night; the carts are goin' in to the market to-morrow airly—you can sit upon them, an' maybe you'll get somethin' more nor you expect: sure the Lord has given it to me, an' why wouldn't I share it wid them that wants it more nor I do?"

The lad's heart yearned to the generous farmer, for he felt that his kindness had the stamp of truth and sincerity upon it. He could only raise his eyes in a silent prayer, that none belonging to him might ever be compelled, as strangers and way-farers, to commit themselves, as he did, to the casualties of life, in pursuit of those attainments which poverty cannot otherwise command. Fervent, indeed, was his prayer; and certain we are, that because it was sincere, it must have been heard.

In the meantime, the good woman, or *vanithee*, had got the pot of water warmed, in which Jemmy was made to put his feet. She then stripped up her arms to the elbows, and, with soap and seedy meal, affectionately bathed his legs and feet: then, taking the praskeen, or coarse towel, she wiped them with a kindness which thrilled to his heart.

"And now," said she, "I must give you a cure for blisthers, an' it 's this:—In the mornin', if we 're all spared, as we will, plase the Almighty, I 'll give you a needle an' some white woollen thread, well soaped. When your blisthers gets up, dhraw the soapy thread through them, clip it on each side, an', my life for yours, they won't throuble you. Sure I thried it the year I went on my Station to Lough Derg, an' I know it to be the rale cure."

* This, almost in every instance, is the dress of a wealthy Irish farmer.

"Here, Nelly," said the farmer,—who sat with a placid benevolent face, smoking his pipe on the opposite hob—to one of the maids who came in from milking,—"bring up a noggin of that milk, we want it here: let it be none of your washy *foremilk*, but the *strippins*, Nelly, that has the strinth in it. Up wid it here, a colleen."

"The never a one o' the man but 's doatin' downright, so he is," observed the wife, "to go to fill the tired child's stomach wid plash. Can't you wait till he ates a thrifle o' somethin' stout, to keep life in him, afther his hard journey? Does your feet feel themselves cool an' asy now, a hagur?"

"Indeed," said Jemmy, "I 'm almost as fresh as when I set out. 'Twas little thought I had, when I came away this mornin', that I 'd meet wid so much friendship on my journey. I hope it's a sign that God's on my side in my undertakin'!"

"I hope so, avourneen—I hope so, an' it is, too," replied the farmer, taking the pipe out of his mouth, and mildly whiffing away the smoke, "an' God 'll be always on your side, as long as your intentions are good. Now ate somethin'—you must want it by this; an' thin, when you rest yourself bravely, take a tass into a good feather-bed, where you can sleep rings round you.* Who knows but you 'll be able to say mass for me or some o' my family yit. God grant that, any way, avick!"

Poor James's heart was too full to eat much; he took, therefore, only a very slender portion of the refreshments set before him; but his hospitable entertainer had no notion of permitting him to use the free exercise of his discretion on this important point. When James put away the knife and fork, as an indication of his having concluded the meal, the farmer and his wife turned about, both at the same moment, with a kind of astonishment—

"Eh? is it givin' over that way you are? Why, a lanna, it 's nothin' at all you 've tuck; sure little Brian there would make a fool of you, so he would, at the atin'. Come, come, a bouchal—don 't be ashamed, or make any way sthrange at all, but ate hearty."

"I declare I *have* ate heartily, thank you," replied James; "oceans itself, so I did. I couldn't swally a bit more if the house was full."

"Arrah, Brian," said the wife, "cut him up more o' that hung beef, it 's ashamed the crathur is! Take it, avick; don't we know the journey you had? Faix, if one o' the boys was out on a day's thravellin', you 'd see how he 'd handle himself."

"Indeed," said James, "I can't—if I could I would. Sure I would be no way backward at all, so I wouldn't."

"Throth, an' you can an' must," said the farmer: "the never a rise you 'll rise, till you finish that"—putting over a complement out of all reasonable proportion with his age and size.

"There now 's a small taste, an' you must finish it. To go to ate nothin' at all! Hut tut! by the tops o' my boots, you must put that clear an' clane out o' sight, or I 'll go mad an' burn them."

The lad recommenced, and continued to eat as long as he could possibly hold out; at length he ceased:

* As much as you please

"I can't go on," said he; "don't ax me: I can't indeed."

"Bad manners to the word I'll hear till you finish it: you know it 's but a thrifle to spake of. Thry agin, avick, but take your time; you 'll be able for it."

The poor lad's heart was engaged on other thoughts and other scenes; his home, and its beloved inmates—sorrow, and the gush of young affections, were ready to burst forth.

"I cannot ate," said he, and he looked imploringly on the farmer and his wife, whilst the tears started to his eyes—"don't ax me, for my heart 's wid them I left behind me, that I may never see agin;" and he wept in a burst of grief which he could not restrain.

Neither the strength nor tenderness of the lad's affection was unappreciated by this excellent couple. In a moment the farmer's wife was also in tears; nor did her husband break the silence for some minutes.

"The Almighty pity an' strengthen him!" said the farmer's wife, "but he has the good an' the kind heart, an' would be a credit to any family.—Whisht, acushla machree—whisht, we won 't ax you to ate—no indeed. It was out o' kindness we did it: don't be cast down aither; sure it isn't the ocean you're crossin'; but goin' from one county like to another. God 'ill guard an' take care o' you, so he will. Your intintion 's good, an' he 'll prosper it."

"He will, avick," said the farmer himself—"he will. Cheer up, my good boy! I know thim that's larned an' creditable clargy this day, that went as you're goin'—ay, an' that ris an' helped their parents, an' put them above poverty an' distress; an' never fear, wid a blessin', but you 'll do the same."

"That's what brings me at all," replied the boy, drying his tears; "if I was once able to take them out o' their distresses, I 'd be happy: only I'm afeard the cares o' the world will break my father's heart before I have it in my power to assist him."

"No such thing, darlin'," said the good woman. "Sure his hopes out o' you, an' his love for you, will keep him up; an' you dunna but God may give him a blessin' too, avick."

"Mix another sup o' that for him," said the farmer: "he's low spirited, an' it 's too strong to give him any more of it as it is. Childhre, where 's the masther from us—eh? Why, thin, God help them, the crathurs—wasn't it *thoughtful** o' them to lave the place while he was at his dinner, for fraid he'd be dashed—manin' them young crathurs, Alley. But can you tell us where the 'masther' is? Isn't this his night wid us? I know he tuck his dinner here."

"Ay did he; but it's up to Larry Murphy's he's gone, to thry his son in his book-keepin'. Mavrone, but he had time enough to put him well through it afore this, any way."

As she spoke, a short thickset man, with black twinkling eyes and ruddy cheeks entered. This personage was no other than the schoolmaster of that district, who circulated, like a newspaper, from one farmer's house to another, in order to expound for his kind entertainers the news of the day, his own learning, and the very evident extent of their ignorance.

* Considerate.

The moment he came in, the farmer and his wife rose with an air of much deference, and placed a chair for him exactly opposite the fire, leaving a respectful distance on each side, within which no illiterate mortal durst presume to sit.

"Misther Corcoran," said the farmer, presenting Jemmy's satchel, through which the shapes of the books were quite plain, "*thig in thu shinn?*" * and as he spoke he looked significantly at its owner.

"Ah!" replied the man of letters, "*thigum, thigum.*† God be wid the day when I carried the likes of it. 'Tis a badge of polite genius, that no boy need be ashamed of. So my young suckling of litherature, you're bound for Munster?—for that counthry where the swallows fly in conic sections—where the magpies and the turkeys confab in Latin, and the cows and bullocks will roar you Doric Greek—bo-a-o—clamo. What's your pathronymic?—*quo nomine gowdes, Domine doctissime?*"

The lad was silent; but the farmer's wife turned up the whites of her eyes with an expression of wonder and surprise at the erudition of the "masther."

"I persave you are as yet uninitiated into the elementary *principia* of the languages; well—the honour is still before you. What's your name?"

"James M'Evoy, sir."

Just now the farmer's family began to assemble round the spacious hearth; the young lads, whose instruction the worthy teacher claimed as his own peculiar task, came timidly forward, together with two or three pretty bashful girls with sweet flashing eyes, and countenances full of feeling and intelligence. Behind on the settles, half-a-dozen servants of both sexes sat in pairs—each boy placing himself beside his favourite girl. These *appeared* to be as strongly interested in the learned conversation which the master held, as if they were masters and mistresses of Munster Latin and Doric Greek themselves; but an occasional thump cautiously bestowed by no slender female hand upon the sturdy shoulder of her companion, or a dry cough from one of the young men, fabricated to drown the coming blow, gave slight indications that they contrived to have a little amusement among themselves, altogether independent of Mr. Corcoran's erudition.

When the latter came in, Jemmy was taking the tumbler of punch which the farmer's wife had mixed for him; on this he fixed an expressive glance, which instantly reverted to the *vanithee*, and from her to the large bottle which stood in a window to the right of the fire. It is a quick eye, however, that can anticipate Irish hospitality.

"Alley," said the farmer, ere the wife had time to comply with the hint conveyed by the black, twinkling eye of the schoolmaster; "why, Alley"—

"Sure, I am," she replied, "an' will have it for you in less than no time."

She accordingly addressed herself to the bottle, and in a few minutes handed a reeking jug of punch to the *Farithee*, or good man.

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* Do you understand this?

† I understand—I understand.

"Come, Masther, by the hand o' my body, I don't like dhry talk so long as I can get anything to moisten the discoorse. Here's your health, Masther," continued the farmer, winking at the rest, "and a speedy conclusion to what you know! In throth, she's the pick of a good girl—not to mintion what she has for her portion. I'm a frind to the same family, an' will put a spoke in your wheel, Masther, that 'll sarve you."

"Oh, Mr. Lanigan, very well, sir—very well—you 're becoming quite facetious upon me," said the little man, rather confused; "but upon my credit and reputation, except the amorous inclination in regard to me is on *her* side," and he looked sheepishly at his hands, "I can't say that the arrows of Cupid have as yet pinethrated the sintimintal side of *my* heart. It is not with me as it was wid Dido—hem—

Non 'hæret lateri lethalis arundo,'

as Virgil says. Yet I can't say, but if a friend were to become spokesman for me, and insinuate in my behalf a small taste of amorous sintimintality, why—hem, hem, hem! The company's health! Lad, James M'Evoy, *your* health, and success to you, my good boy!—hem, hem!"

"Here's wishin' him the same!" said the farmer.

"James," said the schoolmaster, "you are goin' to Munsther, an' I can say that I have travelled it from end to end, not to a bad purpose, I hope—hem! Well, a bouchal, there are hard days and nights before you, so keep a firm heart. If you have money, as 'tis likely you have, don't let a single rap of it into the hands of the schoolmaster, although the first thing he'll do will be to bring you home to his own house, an' palaver you night an' day, till he succeeds in persuading you to leave it in his hands for security. You might, if not duly pre-admonished, surrender it to his solicitations, for—

'Nemo mortalium omnibus horis sapit.'

Michael, what case is *mortalium?*" added he, suddenly addressing one of the farmer's sons: "come, now, Michael, where's your brightness? What case is *mortalium?*"

The boy was taken by surprise, and for a few minutes could not reply.

"Come man," said the father, "be sharp, spake out bravely, an' don't be afeard; nor don't be in a hurry aither, we 'll wait for you."

"Let him alone—let him alone," said Corcoran; "I'll face the same boy agin the county for *cuteness*. If he doesn't expound that, I'll never consthre a line of Latin, or Greek, or Masoretic, while I'm livin'."

His cunning master knew right well that the boy, who was only confused at the suddenness of the question, would feel no difficulty in answering it to his satisfaction. Indeed, it was impossible for him to miss it, as he was then reading the seventh book of Virgil, and the fourth of Homer. It is, however, a trick with such masters to put simple questions of that nature to their pupils, when at the houses of their parents, as knotty and difficult, and when they are answered, to assume an air of astonishment at the profound reach of thought displayed by the pupil.

When Michael recovered himself, he instantly replied, " *Mortalium* is the ginitive case of *nemo*, by ' *Nomina Partitiva.*' "

Corcoran laid down the tumbler, which he was in the act of raising to his lips, and looked at the lad with an air of surprise and delight, then at the farmer and his wife, alternately, and shook his head with much mystery. " Michael," said he to the lad, " will you go out, and tell us what the night 's doin'."

The boy accordingly went out—" Why," said Corcoran, in his absence, " if ever there was a phanix, and that boy will be the bird—an Irish phanix he will be, a

Rara avis in terris, nigroque simillima cygno !

There's no batin' him at anything he undhertakes. Why, there 's thim that are makin' good bread by their larnin', that couldn't resolve that; and you all saw how he did it widout the book! Why, if he goes on at this rate, I'm afraid he'll soon be too many for myself—hem ! "

" Too many for yourself! Fill the masther's tumbler, Alley. Too many for yourself! No, no ! I doubt he'll never see that day, bright as he is, an' cute. That's it—put a hape upon it. Give me your hand, masther. I thank you for your attintion to him , an' the boy *is* a credit to us. Come over, Michael, avourneen. Here, take what 's in this tumbler, an' finish it. Be a good boy, an' mind your lessons, an' do everything the masther here—the Lord bless him !—bids you ; an' you'll never want a frind, masther, nor a dinner, nor a bed, nor a guinea, while the Lord spares me aither the one or the other."

" I know it, Mr. Lanigan, I know it ; and I will make that boy the pride of Ireland, if I'm spared. I'll show him *cramboes* that would puzzle the great Scaliger himself ; and many other difficulties I'll let him into, that I have never let out yet, except to Tim Kearney, that bate them all at Thrinity College in Dublin up, last June."

" Arrah, how was that, Masther ?"

" Tim, you see, went in to his Entrance Examinayshuns, and one of the Fellows came to examine him, but divil a long it was till Tim sacked him.

" ' Go back agin,' says Tim, ' and sind some one that's *able* to tache me, for you're *not.*'

" So another greater scholar agin came to thry Tim, and *did* thry him, and Tim made a hare of *him*, before all that was in the place—five or six thousand ladies and gintlemen, at laste !

" The great learned Fellows thin began to look odd enough ; so they picked out the best scholar among them but one, and slipped him at Tim : but well becomes Tim, the never a long it was till he had *him*, too, as dumb as a post. The fellow went back—

" ' Gintlemen,' says he to the rest, ' we 'll be disgraced all out,' says he, ' for except the Prowost sacks that Munsther spalpeen, he 'll bate us all, an' we'll never be able to hould up our heads afther.'

" Accordingly, the Prowost attacks Tim ; and such a meetin' as they had, never was seen in Thrinity College since its establishment. At last when they had been nine hours and a half at it, the Prowost put one word

to him that Tim couldn't expound, so he lost it by *one* word only. For the last two hours the Prowost carried an the examinashun in Hebrew, thinking, you see, he *had* Tim there; but he was mistaken, for Tim answered him in good Munsther Irish, and it so happened that they understood each other, for the two languages are first cousins, or, at all evints, close blood relations. Tim was then pronounced to be the best scholar in Ireland except the Prowost; though among ourselves, they might have thought of the man that *taught* him. That, however, wasn't all. A young lady fell in love wid Tim, and is to make him a present of herself and her great fortune (three estates) the moment he becomes a counsellor; and in the meantime she allows him thirty pounds a year to bear his expenses, and live like a gintleman.

"Now to return to the youth in the corner: *Nemo mortalium omnibus horis sapit.* Jemmy, keep your money, or give it to the priest to keep, and it will be safest; but by no means let the Hyblean honey of the schoolmaster's blarney deprive you of it, otherwise it will be a *vale, vale, longum vale* between you. *Crede experto!*"

"Masther," said the farmer, "many a strange accident you met wid on yer thravels through Munsther?"

"No doubt of that, Mr. Lanigan. I and another boy thravelled it in society together. One day we were walking towards a gintleman's house on the road side, and it happened that we met the owner of it in the vicinity, although we didn't know him to be such.

"'*Salvete, Domini!*' said he, in good fresh Latin.

"'*Tu sis salvus, quoque!*' said I to him, for my comrade wasn't cute, an' I was always orathor.

"'*Unde venitis?*' said he, comin' over us wid another deep piece of larnin,' the construction of which was, 'where do yez come from?'

"I replied, '*Per varios casus et tot discrimina rerum, venimus a Mayo.*'

"'Good!' said he, 'you 're bright; follow me.'

"So he brought us over to his own house, and ordered us bread and cheese and a posset; for it was Friday, an' we couldn't touch mate. He, in the mane time, sat an' chatted along wid us. The thievin' cook, however, in making the posset, kept the curds to herself, except a slight taste, here and there, that floated on the top; but she was liberal enough of the whey, any how.

"Now I had been well trained to fishing in my more youthful days; and no gorsoon could grope a trout wid me. I accordingly sent the spoon through the pond before me wid the skill of a connoisseur; but to no purpose—it came up wid nothin' but the whey.

"So, said I off hand to the gintleman, houlding up the bowl, and looking at it with a disappointed face,

Apparent *rari* nantes in gurgite vasto.

'This,' says I, 'plase your hospitality, may be Pactolus, but the divil a taste o' the proper sand is in the bottom of it.'

"The wit of this, you see, pleased him, and we got an excellent treat in his *studium*, or study; for he was determined to give myself another trial.

"'What's the wickedest line in Virgil?' said he.

"Now I had Virgil at my fingers' ends, so I answered him:

*Flectere si nequeo superos, Acheronta movebo.*

"'Very good,' said he, 'you have the genius, and will come to somethin' yet: now tell me the most moral line in Virgil.'

"I answered:

*'Discere justitiam moniti, et non temnere divos.'**

"'Depend upon it,' said he, 'you will be a luminary. The morning-star will be but a farthing candle to you; and if you take in the learning as you do the cheese, in a short time there won't be a man in Munsther fit to teach you,' and he laughed, for you see he had a tendency to jocosity.

"He did not give me up here, however, being determined to go deeper wid me.

"'Can you translate a newspaper into Latin prose?' said he.

"Now the divil a one o' me was just then sure about the prose, so I was goin' to tell him; but before I had time to speak, he thrust the paper into my hand, and desired me to thranslate half-a-dozen barbarous advertisements.

"The first that met me was about a reward offered for a Newfoundland dog and a terrier, that had been stolen from a fishing-tackle manufacturer, and then came a list of his shabby merchandize, ending with a long-winded encomium upon his gunpowder, shot, and double-barrelled guns. Now, may I be shot wid a blank cartridge, if I ever felt so much at an amplush in my life, and I said so.

"'Your honour has hooked me wid the fishing-hooks,' said I; 'but I grant the cheese was good bait, any how.'

"So he laughed heartily, and bid me go on.

"Well, I thought the first was difficult; but the second was Masoretic to it—something about drawbacks, excisemen, and a long custom-house list, that would puzzle Publius Virgilius Maro, if he was set to translate it. However, I went through wid it as well as I could; where I couldn't find Latin, I laid in the Greek, and where the Greek failed me, I gave the Irish, which, to tell the truth, in consequence of its vernacularity, I found to be the most convanient. Och, och, many a larned scrimmage I have signalised myself in, during my time. Sure my name's as common as a mail-coach in Thrinity College; and 'tis well known there isn't a Fellow in it but I could sack, except, may be, the Prowost. That's their own opinion. 'Corcoran,' says the Prowost, 'is the most larned man in Ireland; an' I'm not ashamed,' says he, 'to acknowledge that I'd rather decline meeting him upon deep points.' Ginteels, all your healths—hem! But among ourselves I could bog him in a very short time; though I'd scorn to deprive the gintleman of his reputaytion or his place, even if he sent me a challenge of larnin' to-morrow, although he's too cute to venture on doing *that*—hem, hem!"

* He is evidently drawing the long-bow here; this anecdote has been told before.

To hear an obscure creature, whose name was but faintly known in the remote parts even of the parish in which he lived, draw the long-bow at such a rate, was highly amusing. The credulous character of his auditory, however, was no slight temptation to him ; for he knew that next to the legends of their saints, or the Gospel itself, his fictions ranked in authenticity ; and he was determined that it should not be his fault if their opinion of his learning and talents were not raised to the highest point.

The feeling experienced by the poor scholar, when he awoke the next morning, was one both of satisfaction and sorrow. He thought once more of his home and kindred, and reflected that it might be possible he had seen the last of his beloved relations. His grief, however, was checked when he remembered the warm and paternal affection with which he was received on the preceding night by his hospitable countryman. He offered up his prayers to God; humbly besought his grace and protection ; nor did he forget to implore a blessing upon those who had thus soothed his early sorrows, and afforded him, though a stranger and friendless, shelter, comfort, and sympathy.

" I hope," thought he, " that I will meet many such, till I overcome my difficulties, an' find myself able to assist my poor father an' mother!"

And he did meet many such among the humble and despised, and neglected of his countrymen ; for—and we say it with pride—the character of this excellent farmer is thoroughly that of our peasantry within the range of domestic life.

When he had eaten a comfortable breakfast, and seen his satchel stuffed with provision for his journey, the farmer brought him up to his own room, in which were also his wife and children.

" God," said he, " has been good to me ; blessed be his holy name!—betther it appears, in one sinse, than he has been to you, dear, though maybe I don't desarve it as well. But no matther, acushla ; *I* have it, an' *you* want it ; so here 's a thrifle to help you forrid in your larnin' ; an' all I ax from you is to offer up a bit of a prayer for me, of an odd time, an' if ever you live to be a priest, to say, if it wouldn't be throublesome, one Mass for me an' those that you see about me. It's not much, James agra—only two guineas. They may stand your friend, whin friends will be scarce wid you ; though, I hope, that won't be the case aither."

The tears were already streaming down Jemmy's cheeks. " Oh," said the artless boy, " God for ever reward you! but sure I have a great dale of money in the—in the—cuff o' my coat. Indeed, I have, an' I won't want it!"

The farmer, affected by the utter simplicity of the lad, looked at his wife and smiled, although a tear stood in his eye at the time. She wiped her eyes with her apron, and backed the kind offer of her husband.

" Take it, asthore ;" she added, " in your cuff! Musha, God help you! sure it's not much you or the likes of you can have in your cuff, avourneen! Don't be ashamed, but take it; we can well afford it, glory be to God for it! It's not, agra, bekase you 're goin' the way you are—though that same 's an honour to you—but bekase our hearts warmed to you, that we offered it, an' bekase we would wish you to be thinkin'

of us now an' thin, when you're in a strange part of the country. Let me open your pocket an' put them into it. That's a good boy, thank you, an' God bless an' prosper you! I'm sure you wor always biddable."

"Now, childher," said the farmer, addressing his sons and daughters, "never see the sthranger widout a frind, nor wantin' a bed or a dinner, when you grow up to be men an' women. There 's many a turn in this world; we may be strangers ourselves; an' think of what I would feel if any of you was far from me, widout money or friends, when I'd hear that you met a father in a strange counthry that lightened your hearts by his kindness. Now, dear, the carts 'll be ready in no time—eh? Why there they are at the gate waitin' for you. Get into one of them, an' they 'll lave you in the next town. Come, man, bud-an' age, be stout-hearted, an' don't cry; sure we did nothin' for you to spake of."

He shook the poor scholar by the hand, and drawing his hat over his eyes, passed hurriedly out of the room. Alley stooped down, kissed his lips, and wept; and the children each embraced him with that mingled feeling of compassion and respect which is uniformly entertained for the poor scholar in Ireland.

The boy felt as if he had been again separated from his parents; with a sobbing bosom and wet cheeks he bid them farewell, and mounting one of the carts was soon beyond sight and hearing of the kind-hearted farmer and his family.

When the cart had proceeded about a mile, it stopped, and one of the men who accompanied it, addressing a boy who passed with two sods of turf under his arm, desired him to hurry on and inform his master that they waited for him.

"Tell Misther Corcoran to come into coort," said the man, laughing, "my Lordship's waitin' to hear his defince for intindin' *not* to run away wid Miss Judy Malowny. Tell him Lord *Carty's* ready to pass sintince on him for not stalin' the heart of her wid his Rule o' Three. Ha! by the holy farmer, you 'll get it for stayin' from school to this hour. Be quick, abouchal!"

In a few minutes the trembling urchin, glad of any message that might serve to divert the dreaded birch from himself, entered the uproarious "Siminary," caught his forelock, bobbed down his head to the master, and pitched his "two sods" into a little heap of turf which lay in the corner of the school.

"Arrah, Pat Roach, is this an hour to inter into my establishment wid impunity? Eh, you Rosicrusian?"

"Masther, sir," replied the adroit monkey, "I 've a message for you, sir, i' you plase."

"An' what might the message be, Masther Pat Roach? To dine to-day wid your worthy father, abouchal?"

"No, sir; it 's from one o' Mr. Lanigan's boys—him that belongs to the carts, sir; he wants to spake to you, sir, i' you plase."

"An' do you give that by way of an apologetical oration for your absence from the advantages of my tuition until this hour? However, *non constat, Patrici;* I 'll pluck the crow wid you on my return. If you don't find yourself a well-flogged youth for your 'mitchin',' never say

that this right hand can administer condign punishment to that part of your physical theory which constitutes the antithesis to your *vacuum caput*. *En et ecce*, you villain," he added, pointing to the birch, "it 's newly cut and trimmed, and pregnant wid alacrity for the operation. I correct, Patricius, on fundamental principles, which you 'll soon *feel* to your cost."

"Masther, sir," replied the lad, in a friendly, conciliating tone, "my fadher 'ud be oblaged to you, if you 'd take share of a fat goose wid him to-morrow."

"Go to your sate, Paddy, avourneen; devil a dacent boy in the siminary I joke so much wid, as I do wid yourself; an' all out of respect for your worthy parents. Faith, I 've a great regard for them, all out, an' tell them so."

He then proceeded to the carts, and approaching Jemmy, gave him such advice touching his conduct in Munster, as he considered to be most serviceable to an inexperienced lad of his years.

"Here," said the kind-hearted soul—"here, James, is my mite; it 's but bare ten shillings; but if I could make it a pound for you, it would give me a degree of delectability which I have not enjoyed for a long time. The truth is, there 's something like the *nodus matrimonii*, or what they facetiously term the priest's gallows, dangling over my head, so that any little thrifle I may get must be kept together for that crisis, James, abouchal; so that must be my apology for not giving you more, joined to the naked fact, that I never was remarkable for a superfluity of cash under any circumstances. Remember what I told you last night. Don't let a shilling of your money into the hands of the masther you settle wid. Give it to the parish priest, and dhraw it from him when you want it. Don't join the parties or the factions of the school. Above all, spake ill of nobody; and if the masther is harsh upon you, either bear it patiently, or mintion it to the priest, or to some other person of respectability in the parish, and you 'll be protected. You 'll be apt to meet cruelty enough, my good boy; for there are larned Neros in Munster, who 'd flog if the province was in flames.

"Now, James, I 'll tell you what you 'll do, when you reach the larned south. Plant yourself on the highest hill in the neighbourhood wherein the academician with whom you intend to stop, lives. Let the hour of reconnoitring be that in which dinner is preparing. When seated there, James, take a survey of the smoke that ascends from the chimnies of the farmers' houses, and be sure to direct your steps to that from which the highest and merriest column issues. This is the old plan, and it is a sure one. The highest smoke rises from the largest fire, the largest fire boils the biggest pot, the biggest pot generally holds the fattest bacon, and the fattest bacon is kept by the richest farmer. It's a wholesome and comfortable *climax*, my boy, and one by which I myself was enabled to keep a dacent portion of educated flesh between the master's birch and my ribs. The science itself is called Gastric Geography, and is peculiar only to itinerant young gintlemen who seek for knowledge in the classical province of Munster.

"Here 's a book that thravelled along wid myself through all my pere-

grinations—Creech's Translation of Horace. Keep it for my sake; and when you accomplish your education, if you return home this way, I 'd thank you to give me a call. Farewell! God bless you and prosper you as I wish, and as I am sure you desarve."

He shook the lad by the hand; and as it was probable that his own former struggles with poverty, when in the pursuit of education, came with all the power of awakened recollection to his mind, he hastily drew his hand across his eyes, and returned to resume the brief but harmless authority of the ferula.

After arriving at the next town, Jemmy found himself once more prosecuting his journey alone. In proportion as he advanced into a strange land, his spirits became depressed, and his heart cleaved more and more to those whom he had left behind him. There is, however, an enthusiasm in the visions of youth, in the speculations of a young heart, which frequently overcomes difficulties that a mind taught by the experience of life would often shrink from encountering. We may all remember the utter recklessness of danger with which, in our youthful days, we crossed floods, or stood upon the brow of yawning precipices—feats which, in after years, the wealth of kingdoms could not induce us to perform. Experience, as well as conscience, makes cowards of us all.

The poor scholar in the course of his journey had the satisfaction of finding himself an object of kind and hospitable attention to his countrymen. His satchel of books was literally a passport to their hearts. For instance, as he wended his solitary way, depressed and travel-worn, he was frequently accosted by labourers from behind a ditch on the roadside, and, after giving a brief history of the object he had in view, brought, if it was dinner-hour, to some farm-house or cabin, where he was made to partake of their meal. Even those poor creatures who gain a scanty subsistence by keeping what are called "dhry lodgins," like *lucus a non lucendo*, because they never keep out the rain, and have mostly a bottle of whisky for those who know *how* to call for it,—even they, in most instances, not only refused to charge the poor scholar for his bed, but declined receiving any remuneration for his subsistence.

"Och, och, no, you poor young crathur, not from *you*. No, no; if we wouldn't help the likes o' you, who ought we to help? No dear; but instead o' the *airighad*,* jist lave us your blessin', an' maybe we 'll thrive as well wid that, as we would wid your little pences, that you 'll be wantin' for yourself, whin your frinds won't be near to help you."

Many, in fact, were the little marks of kindness and attention which the poor lad received on his way. Sometimes a ragged peasant, if he happened to be his fellow-traveller, would carry his satchel so long as they travelled together, or a carman would give him a lift on his empty car; or some humorous postilion, or tipsy "shay-boy," with a comical leer in his eye, would shove him into his vehicle, remarking—

"Bedad, let nobody say you 're a poor scholar *now*, an' you goin' to school in a coach! Be the piper that played afore Moses, if ever any rascal upbraids you wid it, tell him, says you—'You damned rap,' says

* Money.

you, 'I wint to school in a coach! an' that,' says you, 'was what none o' yer beggarly gineration was ever able to do,' says you; 'an' moreover, be the same token,' says you, 'be the holy farmer, if you bring it up to me, I 'll make a third eye in your forehead wid the butt o' this whip,' says you. Whish! darlins! That 's the go! There 's drivin', Barny! Eh?"

At length, after much toil and travel, he reached the South, having experienced as he proceeded a series of affectionate attentions, which had, at least, the effect of reconciling him to the measure he had taken, and impressing upon his heart a deeper confidence in the kindness and hospitality of his countrymen.

Upon the evening of the day on which he terminated his journey, twilight was nearly falling; the town in which he intended to stop for the night was not a quarter of a mile before him, yet he was scarcely able to reach it; his short, yielding steps were evidently those of a young and fatigued traveller: his brow was moist with perspiration; he had just begun, too, to consider in what manner he should introduce himself to the master who taught the school at which he had been advised to stop, when he heard a step behind him, and on looking back, he discovered a tall, well-made, ruddy-faced young man, dressed in black, with a book in his hand, walking after him.

"*Unde et quo viator?*" said the stranger on coming up with him.

"Oh, Sir," replied Jemmy, "I have not Latin *yet*."

"You are on your way to seek it, however," replied the other. "Have you travelled far?"

"A long way, indeed, Sir; I came from the County ——, Sir,—the upper part of it."

"Have you letters from your parish priest?"

"I have, Sir, and one from my father's landlord, Square Benson, if you ever heard of him."

"What 's your object in learning Latin?"

"To be a priest, Sir, wid the help o' God; an' to rise my poor father an' mother out of their poverty."

His companion, after hearing this reply, bent a glance upon him, that indicated the awakening of an interest in the lad much greater than he probably otherwise would have felt.

"It 's only of late," continued the boy, "that my father an' mother got poor; they were once very well to do in the world. But they were put out o' their farm in ordher that the agint might put a man that had married a *get* * of his own into it. My father intended to lay his case before Colonel B——, the landlord; but he couldn't see him at all, bekase he never comes near the estate. The agint 's called Yallow Sam, Sir; he 's rich through cheatery an' dishonesty; puts money out at intherest, then goes to law, an' brakes the people entirely; for, somehow, he never was known to lose a law-suit at all, Sir. They say it 's the divil, Sir, that keeps the lawyers on his side; an' that when he an' the lawyers do be dhrawin' up their writins, the devil—God betune me an' harm!—does be helpin' them!"

* A term implying illegitimacy.

"And is Colonel B—— actually—or, rather, was he your father's landlord?"

"He was, indeed, Sir; it 's thruth I 'm tellin' you."

"Singular enough! Stand beside me here—do you see that large house to the right among the trees?"

"I do, Sir; a great big house, entirely—like a castle, Sir."

"The same. Well, that house belongs to Colonel B——, and I am very intimate with him. I am Catholic curate of this parish; and I was, before my ordination, private tutor in his family for four years."

"Maybe, Sir, you might have intherest to get my father back into his farm?"

"I do not know that, my good lad, for I am told Colonel B—— is rather embarrassed, and, if I mistake not, in the power of the man you call Yellow Sam, who has, I believe, heavy mortgages upon his property. But no matter; if I cannot help your father, I shall be able to serve yourself. Where do you intend to stop for the night?"

"In dhry lodgin', Sir, that 's where my father an' mother bid me stop always. They war very kind to me, Sir, in the dhry lodgins."

"Who is there in Ireland who would not be kind *to you*, my good boy? I trust you do not neglect your religious duties?"

"Wid the help o' God, Sir, I strive to attind to them as well as I can; particularly since I left my father and mother. Every night an' mornin', Sir, I say five Pathers, five Aves, an' a Creed; an' sometimes when I 'm walkin' the road, I slip up an odd Pather, Sir, an' Ave, that God may grant me good luck."

The priest smiled at his candour and artlessness, and could not help feeling the interest which the boy had already excited in him increase.

"You do right," said he, "and take care that you neglect not the worship of God. Avoid bad company; be not quarrelsome at school; study to improve yourself diligently; attend mass regularly; and be punctual in going to confession."

After some further conversation the priest and he entered the town together.

"This is my house," said the former; "or if not altogether mine—at least, that in which I lodge; let me see you here at two o'clock to-morrow. In the mean time, follow me, and I shall place you with a family where you will experience every kindness and attention that can make you comfortable."

He then led him a few doors up the street, till he stopped at a decent-looking "House of Entertainment," to the proprietors of which he introduced him.

"Be kind to this strange boy," said the worthy clergyman, "and whatever the charges of his board and lodging may be until we get him settled, I shall be accountable for them."

"God forbid, your Reverence, that ever a penny belongin' to a poor boy lookin' for his larnin' should go into our pockets, if he was wid us twelve months in the year. No—no! He can stay with the bouchaleens;* let them be thryin' one another in their books. If he is fardher

* Little boys.

on in the Latin then Andy, he can help Andy; an' if Andy has the foreway of him, why Andy can help him. Come here, boys, all of yez. Here 's a comarade for yez—a dacent boy that 's lookin' for his larnin', the Lord enable him! Now be kind to him, an' whisper," he added, in an under tone, "don't be bringin' a blush to the gorsoon's face. Do ye hear? Ma chorp! if ye do!—Now mind it. Ye know what I can do whin I 'm well vexed! Go, now, an' get him somethin' to ate an' dhrink, an' let him sleep wid Barney in the feather bed."

During the course of the next day, the benevolent curate introduced him to the parish priest, who, from the frequent claims urged by poor scholars upon his patronage, felt no particular interest in his case. He wrote a short letter, however, to the master with whom Jemmy intended to become a pupil, stating that "he was an honest boy, the son of *legitimate parents*, and worthy of consideration."

The curate, who saw further into the boy's character than the parish priest, accompanied him on the following day to the school; introduced him to the master in the most favourable manner, and recommended him in general to the hospitable care of all the pupils. This introduction did not serve the boy so much as might have been expected; there was nothing particular in the letter of the *parish* priest, and the curate was *but* a curate—no formidable personage in *any* church, where the goodwill of the rector has not been already secured.

Jemmy returned that day to his lodgings, and the next morning, with his Latin Grammar under his arm, he went to the school to taste the first bitter fruits of the tree of knowledge.

On entering it, which he did with a beating heart, he found the despot of a hundred subjects sitting behind a desk, with his hat on, a brow superciliously severe, and his nose crimped into a most cutting and vinegar curl. The truth was, the master knew the character of the curate, and felt that because he had taken Jemmy under his protection, no opportunity remained for him of fleecing the boy, under the pretence of securing his money, and that consequently the arrival of the poor scholar would be no windfall, as he had expected.

When Jemmy entered, he looked first at the master for his welcome; but the master, who verified the proverb, that there are none so blind as those who will not see, took no notice whatsoever of him. The boy then looked timidly about the school in quest of a friendly face, and indeed few faces except friendly ones were turned upon him.

Several of the scholars rose up simultaneously to speak to him; but the pedagogue angrily inquired why they had left their seats and their business.

"Why, Sir," said a young Munsterman, with a fine Milesian face—"be Gorra, Sir, I blieve if *we* don't welcome the poor scholar, I think *you* won't. This is the boy, Sir, that Mr. O'Brien came along wid yistherday, an' spoke so well of."

"I know that, Thady; and Misther O'Brien thinks, because he himself first passed through that overgrown hedge-school wid slates upon the roof of it, called Thrinity College, and matriculated in Maynooth afther, that he has legal authority to recommend every young vagrant to the

gratuitous benefits of legitimate classicality. An', I suppose, that you are acting the Pathrun, too, Thady, and intind to take this young wild-goose under your protection?"

"Why, Sir, isn't he a poor scholar? Sure he mustn't want his bit an' sup, nor his night's lodgin', any how. You 're to give him his larnin only, Sir."

"I suppose so, Mr. Thaddeus; but this is the penalty of celebrity. If I weren't so celebrated a man for classics as I am, I would have none of this work. I tell you, Thady, if I had fifty sons I wouldn't make one o' them *celebrated*."

"Wait till you have one first, Sir, and you may make him as great a numskull as you plase, Masther."

"But in the mean time, Thady, I 'll have no dictation from you, as to whether I 'll have one or fifty; or as to whether he 'll be an ass or a Newton. I say, that a dearth of larnin' is like a year of famine in Ireland. When the people are hard pushed, they bleed the fattest bullocks, an' live on their blood; an' so it is wid us Academicians. It 's always he that has the most larned blood in his veins, and the greatest quantity of it, that such hungry leeches fasten on."

"Thrue for you, Sir," said the youth with a smile; "but they say the bullocks always fatten the betther for it. I hope you 'll bleed well now, Sir."

"Thady, I don't like the curl of your nose; an', moreover, I have always found you prone to sedition. You remember your conduct at the 'Barring out.' I tell you it 's well that your worthy father is a dacent wealthy man, or I 'd be apt to give you a *memoria technica* on the *subtratum*, Thady."

"God be praised for my father's wealth, Sir! But I 'd never wish to have a good memory in the way you mention."

"Faith, an' I 'll be apt to add that to your other qualities, if you don't take care of yourself."

"I want no such addition, Masther; if you do, you 'll be apt to subtract yourself from this neighbourhood, an', may be, there won't be more than a cipher gone out of it, afther all."

"Thady, you 're a wag," exclaimed the crest-fallen pedagogue; "take the lad to your own sate, and show him his task. How is your sister's sore throat, Thady?"

"Why, Sir," replied the benevolent young wit, "she 's betther than I am. She can *swallow* more, Sir."

"Not of larnin', Thady; there you 've the widest gullet in the parish."

"My father 's the richest man in it, Masther," replied Thady. "I think, Sir, my gullet and his purse are much about the same size—wid *you*."

"Thady, you 're first-rate at a reply; but exceedingly deficient in the retort courteous. Take the lad to your sate, I say, and see how far he is advanced, and what he is fit for. I suppose, as you are so ginerous, you will volunteer to tache him yourself."

"I 'll do that wid pleasure, Sir; but I 'd like to know whether *you* intind to tache him or not."

"An' I'd like to know, Thady, who's to pay me for it, if I do. A purty return Michael Rooney made me for making him such a linguist as he is. 'You're a tyrant,' said he, when he grew up, 'and instead of expecting me to thank you for your instructions, you ought to thank me for not preparing you for the county hospital, as a memento of the cruelty and brutality you made me feel, when I had the misfortune to be a poor scholar under you.' And so, because he became curate of the parish, he showed me the outside of it."

"But will you tache this poor young boy, Sir?"

"Let me know who's to guarantee his payments."

"I have money myself, Sir, to pay you for two years," replied Jemmy. "They told me, Sir, that you were a great scholar, an' I refused to stop in other schools by rason of the name you have for Latin and Greek."

"*Verbum sat.*," exclaimed the barefaced knave. "Come here. Now, you see, I persave you have dacency. Here is your task; get that half page by heart. You have a cute look, an' I've no doubt but the stuff's in you. Come to me afther dismiss, 'till we have a little talk together."

He accordingly pointed out the task, after which he placed him at his side, lest the inexperienced boy might be put on his guard by any of the scholars. In this intention, however, he was frustrated by Thady, who, as he thoroughly detested the knavish tyrant, resolved to caution the poor scholar against his dishonesty. Thady, indeed, most heartily despised the mercenary pedagogue, not only for his obsequiousness to the rich, but on account of his severity to the children of the poor. About two o'clock the young wag went out for a few minutes, and immediately returned in great haste to inform the master, that Mr. Delany, the parish priest, and two other gentlemen, wished to see him over at the Cross-Keys, an inn which was kept at a place called the Nine Mile House, within a few perches of the school. The parish priest, though an ignorant insipid old man, was the master's patron, and his slightest wish a divine law to him. The little despot, forgetting his prey, instantly repaired to the Cross-Keys, and in his absence, Thady, together with the larger boys of the school, made M'Evoy acquainted with the fraud about to be practised on him.

"His intintion," said they, "is to keep you at home to-night, in ordher to get whatever money you have into his own hands, that he may keep it safe for you; but if you give him a penny, you may bid farewell to it. Put it in the curate's hands," added Thady, "or in my father's, an' thin it 'll be safe. At all evints, don't stay wid him this night. He 'll take your money and then turn you off in three or four weeks."

"I didn't intind to give him my money," replied Jemmy; "a schoolmaster I met on my way here, bid me not to do it. I'll give it to the priest."

"Give it to the curate," said Thady—"wid him it 'll be safe; for the parish priest doesn't like to throuble himself wid anything of the kind."

This was agreed upon; the boy was prepared against the designs of the master, and a plan laid down for his future conduct. In the mean

time, the latter re-entered the school in a glow of indignation and disappointment.

Thady, however, disregarded him; and as the master knew that the influence of the boy's father could at any time remove him from the parish, his anger subsided without any very violent consequences. The parish priest was his avowed patron, it is true; but if the parish priest knew that Mr. O'Rorke was dissatisfied with him, that moment he would join Mr. O'Rorke in expelling him from the neighbourhood. Mr. O'Rorke was a wealthy and a hospitable man, but the schoolmaster was neither the one nor the other.

During school-hours that day, many a warm-hearted urchin entered into conversation with the poor scholar; some moved by curiosity to hear his brief and simple history; others anxious to offer him a temporary asylum in their fathers' houses; and several to know if he had the requisite books, assuring him that if he had not, they would lend them to him. These proofs of artless generosity touched the homeless youth's heart the more acutely, inasmuch as he could perceive but too clearly that the eye of the master rested upon him, from time to time, with no auspicious glance.

When the scholars were dismissed, a scene occurred which was calculated to produce a smile, although it certainly placed the poor scholar in a predicament by no means agreeable. It resulted from a contest among the boys as to who should first bring him home. The master who, by that cunning for which the knavish are remarkable, had discovered in the course of the day that his design upon the boy's money was understood, did not ask him to his house. The contest was, therefore, among the scholars; who, when the master had disappeared from the school-room, formed themselves into a circle, of which Jemmy was the centre, each pressing his claim to secure him.

"The right 's wid me," exclaimed Thady; "I stood to him all day, an' I say I 'll have him for this night. Come wid me, Jimmy. Didn't I do most for you to-day?"

"I 'll never forget your kindness," replied poor Jemmy, quite alarmed at the boisterous symptoms of pugilism which already began to appear. In fact, many a tiny fist was shut, as a suitable accompaniment to the arguments with which they enforced their assumed rights.

"There, now," continued Thady, "that puts an ind to it; he says he 'll never forget my kindness. That 's enough; come wid me, Jimmy."

"*Is it* enough?" said a lad, who, if his father was less wealthy than Thady's, was resolved to put strength of arm against strength of purse. "Maybe it isn't enough! *I* say I bar it, if your fadher was fifty times as rich!—Rich! Arrah, don't be comin' over us in regard of your riches, man alive! I 'll bring the sthrange boy home this very night, an' it isn't your father's dirty money that 'll prevint me."

"I 'd advise you to get a double ditch about your nose," replied Thady, "before you begin to say anything disrespectful aginst my father.—Don't think to ballyrag over me. *I 'll* bring the boy, for I have the best right to him. Didn't I *do** the masther on his account?"

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* Outwit.

"A double ditch about my nose?"

"Aiye!"

"Are you able to fight me?"

"I 'm able to thry it, any how, an' willin' too."

"Do you *say* you 're able to fight me?"

"I 'll bring the boy home whether or not."

"Thady 's not your match, Jack Ratigan," said another boy. "Why don't you challenge your match?"

"If *you* say a word, I 'll half-sole your eye. Let him *say* whether he 's able to fight me like a man or not. That 's the chat."

"Half-sole my eye! Thin here I am, an' why don't you do it. You 're crowin' over a boy that you 're bigger than. *I 'll* fight you for Thady. Now half-sole my eye if you dar! Eh? Here 's my eye, now! Arrah, be the holy man, I 'd——Don't we know the white hen 's in you. Didn't Barny Murtagh cow you at the black-pool, on Thursday last, whin we wor bathin'?"

"Come, Ratigan," said Thady, "peel, an' turn out. I say, I *am* able to fight you; an' I 'll make you ate your words aginst my father, by way of givin' you your dinner. An' I 'll make the dacent strange boy walk home wid me over your body—that is, if he 'd not be afraid to dirty his feet."

Ratigan and Thady immediately set to, and in a few minutes there were scarcely a little pair of fists present that were not at work, either on behalf of the two first combatants, or with a view to determine their own private rights in being the first to exercise hospitality towards the amazed poor scholar. The fact was, that while the two largest boys were arguing the point, about thirty or forty minor disputes all ran parallel to theirs, and their mode of decision was immediately adopted by the pugnacious urchins of the school. In this manner they were engaged, poor Jemmy attempting to tranquillise and separate them, when the master, armed in all his terrors, presented himself.

With the tact of a sly old disciplinarian, he first secured the door, and instantly commenced the agreeable task of promiscuous castigation. Heavy and vindictive did his arm descend upon those whom he suspected to have cautioned the boy against his rapacity; nor amongst the warm-hearted lads, whom he thwacked so cunningly, was Thady passed over with a tender hand. Springs, bouncings, doublings, blowing of fingers, scratching of heads, and rubbing of elbows—shouts of pain, and doleful exclamations, accompanied by action that displayed surpassing agility—marked the effect with which he plied the instrument of punishment. In the mean time, the spirit of reaction, to use a modern phrase, began to set in. The master, while thus engaged in dispensing justice, first received a rather vigorous thwack on the ear from behind, by an anonymous contributor, who gifted him with what is called a musical ear, for it sang during five minutes afterwards. The monarch, when turning round to ascertain the traitor, received another insult on the most indefensible side, and that with a cordiality of manner, that induced him to send his right hand a reconnoitring the invaded part. He wheeled round a second time with more alacrity than before; but nothing less than the head of Janus could have secured

him on the occasion. The anonymous contributor sent him a fresh article. This was supported by another kick behind: the turf began to fly; one after another came in contact with his head and shoulders so rapidly, that he found himself, instead of being the assailant, actually placed upon his defence. The insurrection spread, the turf flew more thickly; his subjects closed in upon him in a more compact body; every little fist itched to be at him; the larger boys boldly laid in the facers, punched him in the stomach, treated him most opprobriously behind, every kick and cuff accompanied by a memento of his cruelty; in short, they compelled him, like Charles the Tenth, ignominiously to fly from his dominions.

On finding the throne vacant, some of them suggested that it ought to be overturned altogether. Thady, however, who was the ringleader of the rebellion, persuaded them to be satisfied with what they had accomplished, and consequently succeeded in preventing them from destroying the fixtures.

Again they surrounded the poor scholar, who, feeling himself the cause of the insurrection, appeared an object of much pity. Such was his grief that he could scarcely reply to them. Their consolation on witnessing his distress was overwhelming. They desired him to think nothing of it; if the master, they told him, should wreck his resentment on *him*, "be the holy farmer, they would *pay** the *masther*." Thady's claim was now undisputed. With only the injury of a black eye, and a lip swelled to the size of a sausage, he walked home in triumph, the poor scholar accompanying him.

The master, who feared that this open contempt of his authority, running up, as it did, into a very unpleasant species of retaliation, was something like a signal for him to leave the parish, felt rather more of the penitent the next morning than did any of his pupils. He was by no means displeased, therefore, to see them drop in about the usual hour. They came, however, not one by one, but in compact groups, each officered by two or three of the larger boys; for they feared that, had they entered singly, he might have punished them singly, until his vengeance should be satisfied. It was by bitter and obstinate struggles that they succeeded in repressing their mirth, when he appeared at his desk with one of his eyes literally closed, and his nose considerably improved in size and richness of colour. When they were all assembled, he hemmed several times, and, in a woe-begone tone of voice, split—by a feeble attempt at maintaining authority, and suppressing his terrors—into two parts, that jarred most ludicrously, he briefly addressed them as follows:—

"Gintlemen classics, I have been now twenty-six years engaged in the propagation of Latin and Greek litherature, in conjunction wid mathematics, but never, until yesterday, has my influence been spurned; never, until yesterday, have sacrilegious hands been laid upon my person; never, until yesterday, have I been kicked—insidiously, ungallantly, and treacherously kicked—by my own subjects. No, gintlemen,—and whether I ought to bestow that respectable epithet upon you after yesterday's proceedings is a matter which admits of dispute,—never before has the lid of

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* Punish.

my eye been laid drooping, and that in such a manner that I must be blind to the conduct of half of my pupils, whether I will or not. You have complained, it appears, of my want of impartiality; but, God knows, you have compelled me to be partial for a week to come. Neither blame me if I may appear to look upon you with scorn for the next fortnight; for I am compelled to turn up my nose at you much against my own inclination. You need never want an illustration of the *naso adunco* of Horace again; I 'm a living example of it. That, and the doctrine of projectile forces, have been exemplified in a manner that will prevent me from ever relishing these subjects in future. No king can consider himself properly such, until after he has received the oil of consecration; but you, it appears, think differently. You have unkinged me first, and anointed me afterwards; but I say, no potentate would relish such unction. It smells confoundedly of republicanism. Maybe this is what *you* understand by the Republic of Letters; but, if it be, I would advise you to change your principles. You treated my ribs as if they were the ribs of a common man; my shins you took liberties with even to excoriation; my head you made a target of, for your hardest turf; and my nose you dishonoured to my face. Was this ginerous? was it discreet? was it subordinate? and, above all, was it *classical?* However, I will show you what greatness of mind is. I will convince you that it is more noble and god-like to forgive an injury, or rather five dozen injuries, than to avenge one; when—hem—yes, I say, when I—I—*might* so easily avenge it. I now present you wid an amnesty: return to your allegiance; but never, while in this seminary, under my tuition, attimpt to take the execution of the laws into your own hands. Homerians, come up!"

This address, into which he purposely threw a dash of banter and mock gravity, delivered with the accompaniments of his swelled nose and drooping eye, pacified his audience more readily than a serious one would have done. It was received without any reply or symptom of disrespect, unless the occasional squeak of a suppressed laugh, or the visible shaking of many sides with inward convulsions, might be termed such.

In the course of the day, it is true, their powers of maintaining gravity were put to a severe test, particularly when, while hearing a class, he began to adjust his drooping eye-lid, or coax back his nose into its natural position. On these occasions a sudden pause might be noticed in the business of the class; the boy's voice, who happened to read at the time, would fail him; and, on resuming his sentence by command of the master, its tone was tremulous, and scarcely adequate to the task of repeating the words without his bursting into laughter. The master observed all this clearly enough, but his mind was already made up to take no further notice of what had happened.

All this, however, conduced to render the situation of the poor scholar much more easy, or rather less penal, than it would otherwise have been. Still the innocent lad was on all possible occasions a butt for this miscreant. To miss a word was a pretext for giving him a cruel blow. To arrive two or three minutes later than the appointed hour was certain on his part to be attended with immediate punishment. Jemmy bore it all with silent heroism. He shed no tear—he uttered no remonstrance; but, under the

anguish of pain so barbarously inflicted, he occasionally looked round upon his schoolfellows with an expression of silent entreaty that was seldom lost upon them. Cruel to him the master often was; but to inhuman barbarity the large scholars never permitted him to descend. Whenever any of the wealthier farmers' sons had neglected their lessons, or deserved chastisement, the mercenary creature substituted a joke for the birch; but as soon as the son of a poor man, or, which was better still, the poor scholar came before him, he transferred that punishment which the wickedness or idleness of respectable boys deserved, to his or their shoulders. For this outrageous injustice the hard-hearted old villain had some plausible excuse ready, so that it was in many cases difficult for Jemmy's generous companions to interfere in his behalf, or parry the sophistry of such a petty tyrant.

In this miserable way did he pass over the tedious period of a year, going about every night in rotation with the scholars, and severely beaten on all possible occasions by the master. His conduct and manners won him the love and esteem of all except his tyrant instructor. His assiduity was remarkable, and his progress in the elements of English and classical literature surprisingly rapid. This added considerably to his character, and procured him additional respect. It was not long before he made himself useful and obliging to all the boys beneath his standing in the school. These services he rendered with an air of such kindness, and a grace so naturally winning, that the attachment of his schoolfellows increased towards him from day to day. Thady was his patron on all occasions: neither did the Curate neglect him. The latter was his banker, for the boy had very properly committed his purse to his keeping. At the expiration of every quarter the schoolmaster received the amount of his bill, which he never failed to send in, when due.

Jemmy had not, during his first year's residence in the south, forgotten to request the kind Curate's interference with the landlord, on behalf of his father. To be the instrument of restoring his family to their former comfortable holding under Colonel B——, would have afforded him, without excepting the certainty of his own eventual success, the highest gratification. Of this, however, there was no hope, and nothing remained for him but assiduity in his studies, and patience under the merciless scourge of his teacher. In addition to an engaging person and agreeable manners, nature had gifted him with a high order of intellect, and great powers of acquiring knowledge. The latter he applied to the business before him with indefatigable industry. The school at which he settled was considered the first in Munster; and the master, notwithstanding his known severity, stood high, and justly so, in the opinion of the people, as an excellent classical and mathematical scholar. Jemmy applied himself to the study of both, and at the expiration of his second year had made such progress, that he stood without a rival in the school.

It is usual, as we have said, for the poor scholar to go night after night, in rotation, with his schoolfellows; he is particularly welcome in the houses of those farmers whose children are not so far advanced as himself. It is expected that he should instruct them in the evenings, and enable them to prepare their lessons for the following day, a task which

he always performs with pleasure, because in teaching them he is confirming his own mind in the knowledge which he has previously acquired. Towards the end of the second year, however, he ceased to circulate in this manner. Two or three of the most independent parishioners, whose sons were only commencing their studies, agreed to keep him week about; an arrangement highly convenient to him, as by that means he was not so frequently dragged, as he had been, to the remotest parts of the parish. Being an expert penman, he acted also as secretary of grievances to the poor, who frequently employed him to draw up petitions to obdurate landlords, or to their more obdurate agents, and letters to soldiers in all parts of the world, from their anxious and affectionate relations. All these little services he performed kindly and promptly; many a blessing was fervently invoked upon his head; the "good word" and "the prayer" were all they could afford, as they said, "to the *bouchal dhas oge* * that tuck the world an him for sake o' the larnin', an' that hasn't the kindliness o' the mother's breath an' the mother's hand near him, the crathur."

About the middle of the third year he was once more thrown upon the general hospitality of the people. The three farmers with whom he had lived for the preceding six months, emigrated to America, as did many others of that class which, in this country, most nearly approximates to the substantial yeomanry of England. The little purse, too, which he had placed in the hands of the kind priest, was exhausted; a season of famine, sickness, and general distress had set in; and the master, on understanding that he was without money, became diabolically savage. In short, the boy's difficulties increased to a perplexing degree. Even Thady and his grown companions, who usually interposed in his behalf when the master became excessive in correcting him, had left the school, and now the prospect before him was dark and cheerless indeed. For a few months longer, however, he struggled on, meeting every difficulty with meek endurance. From his very boyhood he had reverenced the sanctity of religion, and was actuated by a strong devotional spirit. He trusted in God, and worshipped him night and morning with a sincere heart.

At this crisis he was certainly an object of pity; his clothes, which for some time before had been reduced to tatters, he had replaced by a cast-off coat and small-clothes, a present from his friend the Curate, who never abandoned him. This worthy young man could not afford him money, for as he had but fifty pounds a-year, with which to clothe, subsist himself, keep a horse, and pay rent, it was hardly to be expected that his benevolence could be extensive. In addition to this, famine and contagious disease raged with formidable violence in the parish; so that the claims upon his bounty of hundreds who lay huddled together in cold cabins, in out-houses, and even behind ditches, were incessant as well as heart-rending. The number of interments that took place daily in the parish was awful; nothing could be seen but funerals attended by groups of ragged and emaciated creatures, from whose hollow eyes gleamed forth

* The pretty *young* boy. *Boy* in Ireland does not always imply youth.

the wolfish fire of famine. The wretched mendicants were countless, and the number of coffins that lay on the public roads—where, attended by the nearest relatives of the deceased, they had been placed for the purpose of procuring charity—were greater than ever had been remembered by the oldest inhabitant.

Such was the state of the parish when our poor scholar complained one day in school of severe illness. The early symptoms of the prevailing epidemic were well known; and, on examining more closely into his situation, it was clear that, according to the phraseology of the people, he had "got the faver on his back"—had caught "a heavy load of the faver." The Irish are particularly apprehensive of contagious maladies. The moment it had been discovered that Jemmy was infected, his schoolfellows avoided him with a feeling of terror scarcely credible, and the inhuman master was delighted at any circumstance, however calamitous, that might afford him a pretext for driving the friendless youth out of the school.

"Take," said he, "every thing belongin' to you out of my establishment: you were always a plague to me, but now more so than ever. Be quick, sarra, and nidificate for yourself somewhere else. Do you want to thranslate my siminary into an hospital, and myself into Lazarus, as president? Go off, you wild goose! and conjugate *ægroto* wherever you find a convenient spot to do it in."

The poor boy silently and with difficulty arose, collected his books, and, slinging on his satchel, looked to his schoolfellows, as if he had said, "Which of you will afford me a place where to lay my aching head?" All, however, kept aloof from him; he had caught the contagion, and the contagion, they knew, had swept the people away in vast numbers.

At length he spoke. "Is there any boy among you," he inquired, "who will bring me home? You know I am a stranger, an' far from my own, God help me!"

This was followed by a profound silence. Not one of those who had so often befriended him, or who would, on any other occasion, share their bed and their last morsel with him, would even touch his person, much less allow him, when thus plague-stricken, to take shelter under their roof. Such are the effects of selfishness, when it is opposed only by the force of those natural qualities that are not elevated into a sense of duty by clear and profound views of Christian truth. It is one thing to perform a kind action from constitutional impulse, and another to perform it as a fixed duty, perhaps contrary to that impulse.

Jemmy, on finding himself avoided like a Hebrew leper of old, silently left the school, and walked on without knowing whither he should ultimately direct his steps. He thought of his friend the priest, but the distance between him and his place of abode was greater, he felt, than his illness would permit him to travel. He walked on, therefore, in such a state of misery as can scarcely be conceived, much less described. His head ached excessively, an intense pain shot like death-pangs through his lower back and loins, his face was flushed, and his head giddy. In this state he proceeded, without money or friends; without a house to shelter him, or a bed on which to lie, far from his own relations,

and with the prospect of death, under circumstances peculiarly dreadful, before him! He tottered on, however; the earth, as he imagined, reeling under him; the heavens, he thought, streaming with fire, and the earth indistinct and discoloured. Home, the paradise of the absent—home, the heaven of the affections—with all its tenderness and blessed sympathies, rushed upon his heart. His father's deep but quiet kindness, his mother's sedulous love; his brothers, all that they had been to him—these, with their thousand heart-stirring associations, started into life before him again and again. But he was now ill, and the mother—Ah! the enduring sense of that mother's love placed her brightest, and strongest, and tenderest, in the far and distant group which his imagination bodied forth.

"Mother!" he exclaimed—"oh, mother, why—why did I ever lave you? Mother! the son you loved is dyin' without a kind word, lonely and neglected, in a strange land! Oh, my *own* mother! why did I ever lave you?"

The conflict between his illness and his affections overcame him; he staggered—he grasped as if for assistance at the vacant air—he fell, and lay for some time in a state of insensibility.

The season was then that of midsummer, and early meadows were falling before the scythe. As the boy sank to the earth, a few labourers were eating their scanty dinner of bread and milk so near him, that only a dry low ditch ran between him and them. They had heard his words indistinctly, and one of them was putting the milk bottle to his lips when, attracted by the voice, he looked in the direction of the speaker, and saw him fall. They immediately recognised "the poor scholar," and in a moment were attempting to recover him.

"Why thin, my poor fellow, what's *a shaughran* wid you?"

Jemmy started for a moment, looked about him, and asked, "Where am I?"

"Faitha, thin, you're in Rory Connor's field, widin a few perches of the high-road. But what ails you, poor boy? Is it sick you are?"

"It is," he replied; "I have got the faver. I had to lave school; none o' them would take me home, an' I doubt I must die in a Christian counthry undher the open canopy of heaven. Oh, for God's sake, don't lave me! Bring me to some hospital, or into the next town, where people may know that I'm sick, an' maybe some kind Christian will relieve me."

The moment he mentioned "faver," the men involuntarily drew back, after having laid him reclining against the green ditch.

"Thin, thundher an' turf, what's to be done?" exclaimed one of them, thrusting his spread fingers into his hair. "Is the poor boy to die widout help among Christyeens like uz?"

"But hasn't he the sickness?" exclaimed another: "an' in that case, Pether, what's to be done?"

"Why, you gommoch, isn't that what I'm wantin' to know? You wor ever and always an ass, Paddy, except before you wor born, an' thin you wor like Major M'Curragh, worse nor nothin'. Why the sarra do you be spakin' about the sickness, the Lord protect us, whin you know I'm so timersome of it?"

"But considher," said another, edging off from Jemmy, however, "that

he 's a poor scholar, an' that there 's a great blessin' to thim that assists the likes of him."

"Ay, is there that, sure enough, Dan; but you see—blur-an-age, what 's to be done? He can't die this way, wid nobody wid him but himself."

"Let us help him!" exclaimed another, "for *God's* sake, an' we won't be apt to take it thin."

"Ay, but how can we help him, Frank? Oh, bedad, it 'ud be a murdherin' shame, all out, to let the crathur die by himself, widout company, so it would."

"No one will take him in, for fraid o' the sickness. Why, I 'll tell you what we 'll do:—Let us shkame the remainder o' this day off o' the Major, an' build a shed for him on the road-side here, jist against the ditch. It 's as dhry as powdher. Thin we can go through the neighbours, an' get thim to sit near him time about, an' to bring him little *dhreeniens* o' nourishment."

"Divil a purtier! Come thin, let us get a lot o' the neighbours, an' set about it, poor bouchal. Who knows but it may bring down a blessin' upon us, aither in this world or the next."

"Amin! I pray Gorra! an' so it will sure! doesn't the Catechiz say it? 'There is but one Church,' says the Catechiz, 'one Faith, an' one Baptism.' Bedad, there 's a power o' fine larnin' in the same Catechiz, so there is, an' mighty improvin'."

An Irishman never works for wages with half the zeal which he displays when working for love. Ere many hours passed, a number of the neighbours had assembled, and Jemmy found himself on a bunch of clean straw, in a little shed erected for him at the edge of the road.

Perhaps it would be impossible to conceive a more gloomy state of misery than that in which young M'Evoy found himself. Stretched on the side of the public road, in a shed formed of a few loose sticks covered over with "scraws," that is, the sward of the earth pared into thin stripes—removed above fifty perches from any human habitation—his body racked with a furious and oppressive fever—his mind conscious of all the horrors by which he was surrounded—without the comforts even of a bed or bed-clothes—and, what was worst of all, those from whom he might expect kindness, afraid to approach him! Lying helpless, under these circumstances, it ought not to be wondered at, if he wished that death might at once close his extraordinary sufferings, and terminate those struggles which filial piety had prompted him to encounter.

This certainly is a dark picture, but our humble hero knew that even there the power and goodness of God could support him. The boy trusted in God; and when removed into his little shed, and stretched upon his clean straw, he felt that his situation was, in good sooth, comfortable when contrasted with what it might have been, if left to perish behind a ditch, exposed to the scorching heat of the sun by day, and the dews of heaven by night. He felt the hand of God even in this, and placed himself, with a short but fervent prayer, under his fatherly protection.

Irishmen, however, are not just that description of persons who can

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pursue their usual avocations, and see a fellow-creature die, without such attentions as they can afford him; not precisely so bad as that, gentle reader! Jemmy had not been two hours on his straw, when a second shed much larger than his own, was raised within a dozen yards of it. In this a fire was lit; a small pot was then procured, milk was sent in, and such other little comforts brought together, as they supposed necessary for the sick boy. Having accomplished these matters, a kind of guard was set to watch and nurse-tend him; a pitchfork was got, on the prongs of which they intended to reach him bread across the ditch; and a long-shafted shovel was borrowed, on which to furnish him drink with safety to themselves. That inextinguishable vein of humour, which in Ireland mingles even with death and calamity, was also visible here. The ragged half-starved creatures laughed heartily at the oddity of their own inventions, and enjoyed the ingenuity with which they made shift to meet the exigencies of the occasion, without in the slightest degree having their sympathy and concern for the afflicted youth lessened.

When their arrangements were completed, one of them (he of the scythe) made a little whey, which, in lieu of a spoon, he stirred with the end of his tobacco-pipe; he then extended it across the ditch upon the shovel, after having put it in a tin porringer.

"Do you want a taste o' whay, avourneen?"

"Oh, I do," replied Jemmy; "give me a drink for God's sake."

"There it is, a bouchal, on the shovel. Musha if myself rightly knows what side you're lyin' an', or I'd put it as near your lips as I could. Come, man, be stout, don't be cast down at all at all; sure, bud-an-age, we're shovelin' the whay to you, any how."

"I have it," replied the boy—"oh, I have it. May God never forget this to you, whoever you are."

"Faith, if you want to know who I am, I'm Pether Connor the mower, that never seen to-morrow. Be Gorra, poor boy, you mustn't let your spirits down at all at all. Sure the neighbours is all bint to watch an' take care of you.—May I take away the shovel?—an' they've built a brave snug shed here beside yours, where they'll stay wid you time about until you get well. We'll feed you wid whay enough, bekase we've made up our minds to stale lots o' sweet milk for you. Ned Branagan an' I will milk Rody Hartigan's cows to-night, wid the help o' God. Divil a bit sin in it, so there isn't, an' if there is, too, be my sowl there's no harm in it any way—for he's but a nager himself, the same Rody. So, acushla, keep a light heart, for, be Gorra, you're sure o' the thin pair o' throwsers, any how. Don't think you're desarted—for you're not. It's all in regard o' bein' afeard o' this faver, or it's not this way you'd be; but, as I said a while agone, when you want anything, spake, for you'll still find two or three of us beside you here, night an' day. Now won't you promise to keep your mind asy, when you know that we're beside you?"

"God bless you," replied Jemmy, you've taken a weight off of my heart. I thought I'd die wid nobody near me at all."

"Oh, the sorra fear of it. Keep your heart up. We'll stale lots o'

milk for you. Bad scran to the baste in the parish but we 'll milk, sooner nor you'd want the whay, you crathur you."

The boy felt relieved, but his malady increased; and were it not that the confidence of being thus watched and attended to supported him, it is more than probable he would have sunk under it.

When the hour of closing the day's labour arrived, Major —— came down to inspect the progress which his mowers had made, and the goodness of the crop upon his meadows. No sooner was he perceived at a distance, than the scythes were instantly resumed, and the mowers pursued their employment with an appearance of zeal and honesty that could not be suspected.

On arriving at the meadows, however, he was evidently startled at the miserable day's work they had performed.

" Why, Connor," said he, addressing the nurse-tender, " how is this? I protest you have not performed half a day's labour! This is miserable and shameful."

" Bedad, Major, it's thrue for your honour, sure enough. It 's a poor day's work, the never a doubt of it. But be all the books that never was opened or shut, busier men than we wor since mornin' couldn't be had for love or money. You see, Major, these meadows, bad luck to them!—God pardon me for cursin' the harmless crathurs, for sure 'tisn't their fau't, Sir: but you see, Major, I 'll insinse you into it. Now look here, your honour. Did you ever see deeper meadow nor that same, since you war foal—hem—since you war born, your honour? Maybe, your honour, Major, 'ud just take the scythe an' sthrive to cut a swaythe?"

" Nonsense, Connor; don't you know I cannot."

" Thin, be Gorra, Sir, I wish you could thry it. I 'd kiss the book, we did more labour, an' worked harder this day, nor any day for the last fortnight. If it was light grass, Sir—see here, Major, here 's a light bit—now, look at how the scythe runs through it! Thin look at here agin—just observe this, Major—why, murdher alive, don't you see how slow she goes through *that* where the grass is *heavy!* Bedad, Major, you 'll be made up this sason wid your hay, any how. Divil carry the finer meadow ever I put scythe in nor this same meadow, God bless it!"

" Yes, I see it, Connor; I agree with you as to its goodness. But the reason of that is, Connor, that I always direct my steward myself in laying it down for grass. Yes, you 're right, Connor; if the meadow were light, you could certainly mow comparatively a greater space in a day."

" Be the livin' farmer, God pardon me for swearin', it 's a pleasure to have dalins wid a gintleman like you, that knows things as cute as if you war a mower yourself, your honour. Bedad, I 'll go bail, Sir, it wouldn't be hard to tache you that same."

" Why, to tell you the truth, Connor, you have hit me off pretty well. I 'm beginning to get a taste for agriculture."

" But," said Connor, scratching his head, " won't your honour allow us the price of a glass, or a pint o' porther, for our hard day's work. Bad cess to me, Sir, but this meadow 'ill play the puck wid us afore we get it finished. Atween ourselves, Sir—if it wouldn't be takin' freedoms—if you 'd look to *your own* farmin' *yourself*. The steward, Sir, is a dacent

kind of a man; but, sowl, he couldn't hould a candle to your honour in seein' to the best way of doing a thing, Sir. Won't you allow us glasses a-piece, your honour? Faix, we 're kilt entirely, so we are."

"Here is half-a-crown among you, Connor; but don't get drunk."

"Dhrunk! Musha, long may you reign, Sir! Be the scythe in my hand, I 'd rather—Och, faix you 're one o' the ould sort, Sir—the raal Irish gintleman, your honour. An' sure your name 's far and near for that, any how."

Connor's face would have done the heart of Brooke or Cruickshank good, had either of them seen it charged with humour so rich as that which beamed from it, when the Major left them to enjoy their own comments upon what had happened.

"Oh, be the livin' farmer," said Connor, "are we alive at all afther *doin'* the Major! Oh, thin, the curse o' the crows upon you, Major darlin', but you are a *Manus!* * The damn' rip o' the world, that wouldn't give the breath he breathes to the poor for God's sake, and he 'll *threwn* a man half-a-crown that 'll blarney him for farmin', and him doesn't know the differ atween a Cork-red an' a Yallow-leg." †

"Faith, he 's the boy that knows how to make a Judy of himself any way, Pether," exclaimed another. "The divil a hapurth asier nor to give these Quality the bag to hould, so there isn't. An' they think themselves so cute, too!"

"Augh!" said a third, "couldn't a man find the soft side o' them as asy as make out the way to his own nose, widout being led to it. Divil a sin it is to *do them*, any way. Sure, he thinks we wor tooth an' nail at the meadow all day; an' me thought I 'd never recover it, to see Pether here—the rise he tuck out of him! Ha, ha, ha—och, och, murdher, oh!"

"Faith," exclaimed Connor, "'twas good, you see, to help the poor scholar; only for it we couldn't get shkamin' the half-crown out of him. I think we ought to give the crathur half of it, an' him so sick: he 'll be wantin' it worse nor ourselves."

"Oh, be Gorra, he's fairly entitled to that. I vote him fifteen pince."

"Surely!" they exclaimed unanimously. "Tundher-an'-turf! wasn't he the manes of gettin' it for us?"

"Jemmy, a bouchal," said Connor, across the ditch to M'Evoy, "are you sleepin'?"

"Sleepin'! Oh, no," replied Jemmy; "I 'd give the wide world for one wink of asy sleep."

"Well, aroon, here's fifteen pince for you, that we shkam—Will I tell him how we got it?"

"No don't," replied his neighbours; "the boy 's given to devotion, an' maybe might scruple to take it.

"Here's fifteen pince, avourneen, on the shovel, that we 're givin' you *for God's sake.* If you *over* ‡ this, won't you offer up a prayer for us? Won't you, avick?"

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* A soft booby easily hoaxed. † Different kinds of potatoes.

‡ That is—to get over—to survive.

" I can never forget your kindness," replied Jemmy ; " I will always pray for you, and may God for ever bless you and yours ! "

" Poor crathur ! May the Heavens above have prosthration on him ! Upon my sowl, it 's good to have his blessin' an' his prayer. Now don't fret, Jemmy ; we 're lavin' you wid a lot o' neighbours here. They 'll watch you time about, so that whin you want anything, call, avourneen, an' there 'll still be some one here to answer. God bless you, an' restore you, till we come wid the milk we 'll stale for you, wid the help o' God. Bad cess to me, but it 'ud be a mortual sin, so it would, to let the poor boy die at all, an' him so far from home. For, as the Catechiz says, ' There is but one Faith, one Church, and one Baptism ! ' Well, the readin' that 's in that Catechiz is mighty improvin', glory be to God ! "

It would be utterly impossible to detail the affliction which our poor scholar suffered in this wretched shed, for the space of a fortnight, notwithstanding the efforts of those kind-hearted people to render his situation comfortable.

The little wigwam they had constructed near him, was never, even for a moment, during his whole illness, without two or three persons ready to attend him. In the evening their numbers increased ; a fire was always kept burning, over which a little pot for making whey or gruel was suspended. At night they amused each other with anecdotes and laughter, and occasionally with songs, when certain that their patient was not asleep. Their exertions to steal milk for him were performed with uncommon glee, and related among themselves with great humour. These thefts would have been unnecessary, had not the famine which then prevailed through the province been so excessive. The crowds that swarmed about the houses of wealthy farmers, supplicating a morsel to keep body and soul together, resembled nothing which our English readers ever had an opportunity of seeing. Ragged, emaciated creatures, tottered about with an expression of wildness and voracity in their gaunt features ; fathers and mothers reeled under the burthen of their beloved children, the latter either sick, or literally expiring for want of food ; and the widow, in many instances, was compelled to lay down her head to die, with the wail, the feeble wail, of her withered orphans mingling with her last moans ! In such a state of things it was difficult to procure a sufficient quantity of milk to allay the unnatural thirst even of one individual, when parched by the scorching heat of a fever. Notwithstanding this, his wants were for the most part anticipated, so far as their means would allow them ; his shed was kept waterproof ; and either shovel or pitchfork always ready to be extended to him, by way of substitution for the right hand of fellowship.

When he called for anything, the usual observation was, " Husht ! the crathur's callin' ; I must take the shovel an' see what he wants."

There were times, it is true, when the mirth of the poor fellows was very low, for hunger was generally among themselves ; there were times when their own little shed presented a touching and melancholy spectacle—perhaps we ought also to add, a noble one ; for, to contemplate a number of men, considered rude and semi-barbarous, devoting themselves, in the midst of privations the most cutting and oppressive, to the care

and preservation of a strange lad, merely because they knew him to be without friends and protection, is to witness a display of virtue truly magnanimous. The food on which some of the persons were occasionally compelled to live, was blood boiled up with a little oatmeal; for when a season of famine occurs in Ireland, the people usually bleed the cows and bullocks to preserve themselves from actual starvation. It is truly a sight of appalling misery to behold feeble women gliding across the country, carrying their cans and pitchers, actually trampling upon fertility and fatness, and collected in the corner of some grazier's farm, waiting, gaunt and ravenous as Gouls, for their portion of blood. During these melancholy periods of want, everything in the shape of an esculent disappears. The miserable creatures will pick up chicken-weed, nettles, sorrell, bugloss, preshagh, and sea-weed, which they will boil and eat with the voracity of persons writhing under the united agonies of hunger and death! Yet, singular to say, the very country thus groaning under such a terrible sweep of famine is actually pouring from all her ports a profusion of food, day after day; flinging it from her fertile bosom, with the wanton excess of a prodigal oppressed by abundance.

Despite, however, of all that the poor scholar's nurse-guard suffered, he was attended with a fidelity of care and sympathy which no calamity could shake. Nor was this care fruitless; after the fever had passed through its usual stages, he began to recover. In fact, it has been observed very truly, that scarcely any person has been known to die under circumstances similar to those of the poor scholar. These sheds, the erection of which is not unfrequent in case of fever, have the advantage of pure free air, by which the patient is cooled and refreshed. Be the cause of it what it may, the fact has been established, and we feel satisfaction in being able to adduce our humble hero as an additional proof of the many recoveries which take place in situations apparently so unfavourable to human life. But how is it possible to detail what M'Evoy suffered during this fortnight of intense agony? Not those who can command the luxuries of life—not those who can reach its comforts—nor those who can supply themselves with its bare necessaries—neither the cotter who struggles to support his wife and helpless children—the mendicant who begs from door to door—nor even the felon in his cell—can imagine what he felt in the solitary misery of his feverish bed. Hard is the heart that cannot *feel* his sorrows, when, stretched beside the common way, without a human face to look on, he called upon the mother whose brain, had she known his situation, would have been riven—whose affectionate heart would have been broken by the knowledge of his affliction. It was a situation which afterwards appeared to him dark and terrible. The pencil of the painter could not depict it, nor the pen of the poet describe it, except like a dim vision, which neither the heart nor the imagination are able to give to the world as a tale steeped in the sympathies excited by reality.

His whole heart and soul, as he afterwards acknowledged, were, during his trying illness, *at home*. The voices of his parents, of his sisters, and of his brothers, were always in his ears; their countenances surrounded his cold and lonely shed; their hands touched him; their eyes looked

upon him in sorrow—and their tears bedewed him. Even there, the light of his mother's love, though she herself was distant, shone upon his sorrowful couch; and he has declared, that in no past moment of affection did his soul ever burn with a sense of its presence so strongly as it did in the heart-dreams of his severest illness. But God is love, "and tempereth the wind to the shorn lamb."

Much of all his sufferings would have been alleviated, were it not that his two best friends in the parish, Thady and the curate, had been both prostrated by the fever at the same time with himself. There was consequently no person of respectability in the neighbourhood cognizant of his situation. He was left to the humbler class of the peasantry, and honourably did they, with all their errors and ignorances, discharge those duties which greater wealth and greater knowledge would, probably, have left unperformed.

On the morning of the last day he ever intended to spend in the shed, at eleven o'clock, he heard the sounds of horses' feet passing along the road. The circumstance was one quite familiar to him; but these horsemen, whoever they might be, stopped, and immediately after, two respectable looking men, dressed in black, approached him. His forlorn state and frightfully-wasted appearance startled them, and the younger of the two asked, in a tone of voice which went directly to his heart, how it was that they found him in a situation so desolate.

The kind interest implied by the words, and probably a sense of his utterly destitute state, affected him strongly, and he burst into tears. The strangers looked at each other, then at him; and if looks could express sympathy, theirs expressed it.

"My good boy," said the first, "how is it that we find you in a situation so deplorable and wretched as this? Who are you, or why is it that you have not a friendly roof to shelter you?"

"I 'm a poor scholar," replied Jemmy, "the son of honest but reduced parents: I came to this part of the country with the intention of preparing myself for Maynooth, and, if it might plase God, with the hope of being able to raise them out of their distress."

The strangers looked more earnestly at the boy; sickness had touched his fine intellectual features into a purity of expression almost ethereal. His fair skin appeared nearly transparent, and the light of truth and candour lit up his countenance with a lustre which affliction could not dim.

The other stranger approached him more nearly, stooped for a moment, and felt his pulse.

"How long have you been in this country?" he inquired.

"Nearly three years."

"You have been ill of the fever which is so prevalent; but how did you come to be left to the chance of perishing upon the highway?"

"Why, Sir, the people were afeard to let me into their houses in consequence of the faver. I got ill in school, Sir, but no boy would venture to bring me home, an' the master turned me out, to die, I believe. May God forgive him!"

"Who was your master, my child?"

"The great Mr. ——, Sir. If Mr. O'Brien, the curate of the parish, hadn't been ill himself at the same time, or if Mr. O'Rorke's son, Thady, hadn't been laid on his back, too, Sir, I wouldn't suffer what I did."

"Has the curate been kind to you?"

"Sir, only for him and the big boys I couldn't stay in the school, on account of the master's cruelty, particularly since my money was out."

"You are better now—are you not?" said the other gentleman.

"Thank God, Sir!—oh, thanks be to the Almighty, I am! I expect to be able to lave this place to-day or to-morrow."

"And where do you intend to go when you recover?"

The boy himself had not thought of this, and the question came on him so unexpectedly, that he could only reply—

"Indeed, Sir, I don't know."

"Had you," inquired the second stranger, "testimonials from your parish priest?"

"I had, Sir: they are in the hands of Mr. O'Brien. I also had a character from my father's landlord."

"But how," asked the other, "have you existed here during your illness? Have you been long sick?"

"Indeed I can't tell you, Sir, for I don't know how the time passed at all; but I know, Sir, that there were always two or three people attendin' me. They sent me whatever they thought I wanted, upon a shovel or a pitchfork, across the ditch, because they were afraid to come near me."

During the early part of the dialogue, two or three old hats, or caubeens, might have been seen moving steadily over from the wigwam to the ditch which ran beside the shed occupied by M'Evoy. Here they remained stationary, for those who wore them were now within hearing of the conversation, and ready to give their convalescent patient a good word, should it be necessary.

"How were you supplied with drink and medicine?" asked the younger stranger.

"As I 've just told you, Sir," replied Jemmy; "the neighbours here let me want for nothing that they had. They kept me in more whey than I could use; and they got me medicine, too, some way or other. But indeed, Sir, during a great part of the time I was ill, I can't say how they attended me: I wasn't sensible, Sir, of what was goin' on about me."

One of those who lay behind the ditch now arose, and after a few hems and scratchings of the head, ventured to join in the conversation.

"Pray have you, my man," said the elder of the two, "been acquainted with the circumstances of this boy's illness?"

"Is it the poor scholar, my Lord?* Oh thin bedad it 's myself that has that. The poor crathur was in a terrible way all out, so he was. He caught the faver in the school beyant, one day, an' was turned out by the nager o' the world that he was larnin' from."

"Are you one of the persons who attended him?"

"Och, och, the crathur! what could unsignified people like us do for

* The peasantry always address a Roman Catholic Bishop as "My Lord."

him, barrin' a thrifle? Any how, my Lord, it 's the meracle o' the world that he was ever able to *over* it at all. Why, Sir, good luck to the one of him but suffered as much, wid the help o' God, as 'ud overcome fifty men!"

"How did you provide him with drink at such a distance from any human habitation?"

"Throth, hard enough we found it, Sir, to do that same: but sure, whether or not, my Lord, we couldn't be sich nagers as to let him die all out, for want o' somethin' to moisten his throath wid."

"I hope," inquired the other, "you had nothing to do in the milk-stealing which has produced such an outcry in this immediate neighbourhood?"

"Milk-stalin'! Oh, bedad, Sir, there never was the likes known afore in the counthry. *The Lord forgive them that did it!* Be gorra, Sir, the wickedness o' the people's mighty improvin', if one 'ud take warnin' by it, glory be to God!"

"Many of the farmers' cows have been milked at night, Connor—perfectly drained. Even my own cows have not escaped; and we who have suffered are certainly determined, if possible, to ascertain those who have committed the theft. I, for my part, have gone even beyond my ability in relieving the wants of the poor, during this period of sickness and famine; I therefore deserved this the less."

"By the powdhers, your honour, if any gintleman desarved to have his cows *unmilked*, it 's yourself. But, as I said this minute, there 's no end to the wickedness o' the people, so there 's not, although the Catechiz is against them; for, says it, 'there is but one Faith, one Church, an' one Baptism.' Now, Sir, isn't it quare that people, wid sich words in the book afore them, won't be guided by it? I suppose they thought it only a *white* sin, Sir, to take the milk, the thieves o' the world."

"Maybe, your honour," said another, "that it was only to keep the life in some poor sick crathur that wanted it more nor you or the farmers, that they did it. There 's some o' the same farmers desarve worse, for they 're keepin' up the prices o' their male an' praties upon the poor, an' did so all along, that they might make money by our outher distitution."

"That is no justification for theft," observed the graver of the two. "Does any one among you suspect those who committed it in this instance? If you do, I command you, as your Bishop, to mention them."

"How, for instance," added the other, "were you able to supply this sick boy with whey during his illness?"

"Oh thin, gintlemen," replied Connor, dexterously parrying the question, "but it 's a mighty improvin' thing to see our own Bishop,—God spare his Lordship to us!—an' the Protestant minister o' the parish joinin' together to relieve an' give good advice to the poor! Bedad it 's settin' a fine example, so it is, to the Quality, if they 'd take patthern by it."

"Reply," said the Bishop, rather sternly, "to the questions we have asked you."

"The quistions, your Lordship? It 's proud an' happy we 'd be to do what you want; but the sarra man among us *can* do it, barrin' we 'd

say what we *ought not* to say. That 's the thruth, my Lord; an' surely 'tisn't your Gracious Reverence that 'ud want us to go beyant *that?*"

"Certainly not," replied the Bishop. "I warn you against both falsehood and fraud; two charges which might frequently be brought against you in your intercourse with the gentry of the country, whom you seldom scruple to deceive and mislead, by gliding into a character, when speaking to them, that is often the reverse of your real one; whilst, at the same time, you are both honest and sincere to persons of your own class. Put away this practice, for it is both sinful and discreditable."

"God bless your Lordship! an' many thanks to your Gracious Reverence for advisin' us! Well we know that it 's the blessed thing to folly your words."

"Bring over that naked, starved-looking man, who is stirring the fire under that pot," said the Rector. "He looks like Famine itself."

"Paddy Dunn! will you come over here to his honour, Paddy! He 's goin' to give you somethin'," said Connor, adding of his own accord the last clause of the message.

The tattered creature approached him with a gleam of expectation in his eyes that appeared like insanity.

"God bless your honour for your goodness!" exclaimed Paddy. "It 's me that 's in it, Sir!—Paddy Dunn, Sir, sure enough; but, indeed, I 'm the next thing to my own ghost, Sir, now, God help me!"

"What, and for whom, are you cooking?"

"Jist the smallest dhrop in life, Sir, o' gruel, to keep the sowl in that lonely crathur, Sir, the poor scholar."

"Pray how long is it since you have eaten anything yourself?"

The tears burst from the eyes of the miserable creature as he replied—

"Before God in glory, your honour, an' in the presence of his Lordship here, I only got about what 'ud make betther nor half a male widin the last day, Sir. 'Twas a weeshy grain o' male that I got from a friend; an' as Ned Connor here tould me that this crathur had nothin' to make the gruel for him, why I shared it wid him, bekase he couldn't even beg it, Sir, if he wanted it, an' him not able to walk yit."

The worthy pastor's eyes glistened with a moisture that did him honour. Without a word of observation he slipped a crown into the hand of Dunn, who looked at it as if he had been paralysed.

"Oh thin," said he, fervently, "may every hair on your honour's head become a mould-candle to light you into glory! The world's goodness is in your heart, Sir; and may all the blessin's of Heaven rain down upon you an' yours!"

The two gentlemen then gave assistance to the poor scholar, whom the Bishop addressed in kind and encouraging language:—

"Come to me, my good boy," he added, "and if, on further inquiry, I find that your conduct has been such as I believe it to have been, you may rest assured, provided also you *continue* worthy of my good opinion, that I shall be a friend and a protector to you. Call on me when you get well, and I will speak to you at greater length."

"Well," observed Connor, when they were gone, "the divil's own hard puzzle the Bishop had me in, about stalin' the milk. It wint agin the

grain wid me to tell *him* the lie, so I had to invint a bit o' truth to keep my conscience clear; for sure there was *not* a man among us that *could* tell him, barrin' we said what we *oughtn't* to say. Doesn't all the world know that a man oughtn't *to condimn himself?* That was *thruth*, any way; but divil a scruple I 'd have in *bammin'* the other—not but that he 's one o' the best of his sort. Paddy Dunn, quit lookin' at that crown, but get the shovel an' give the boy his dhrink—he 's wantin' it."

The agitation of spirits produced by Jemmy's cheering interview with the Bishop was, for two or three days afterwards, somewhat prejudicial to his convalescence. In less than a week, however, he was comfortably settled with Mr. O'Rorke's family, whose kindness proved to him quite as warm as he had expected.

When he had remained with them a few days, he resolved to recommence his studies under his tyrant master. He certainly knew that his future attendance at the school would be penal to him, but he had always looked forward to the accomplishment of his hopes as a task of difficulty and distress. The severity to be expected from the master could not, he thought, be greater than that which he had already suffered; he therefore decided, if possible, to complete his education under him.

The school, when Jemmy appeared in it, had been for more than an hour assembled, but the thinness of the attendance not only proved the woful prevalence of sickness and distress in the parish, but sharpened the pedagogue's vinegar aspect into an expression of countenance singularly peevish and gloomy. When the lad entered, a murmur of pleasure and welcome ran through the scholars, and joy beamed forth from every countenance but that of his teacher. When the latter noticed this, his irritability rose above restraint, and he exclaimed—

"Silence! and apply to business, or I shall cause some of you to denude immediately. No school ever can prosper in which that *hirudo*, called a poor scholar, is permitted toleration. I thought, sarrah, I told you to nidificate and hatch your wild project undher some other wing than mine."

"I only entrate you," replied our poor hero, "to suffer me to join the class I left while I was sick, for about another year. I 'll be very quiet and humble, and, as far as I can, will do everything you wish me."

"Ah! you are a crawling reptile," replied the savage, "and, in my opinion, nothing but a chate and impostor. I think you have imposed yourself upon Mr. O'Brien for what you are not; that is, the son of an honest man. I have no doubt but many of your nearest relations died after having seen their own funerals. Your mother, you runagate, wasn't your father's wife, I 'll be bail."

The spirit of the boy could bear this no longer; his eyes flashed, and his sinews stood out in the energy of deep indignation.

"It is false," he exclaimed; "it is as false as your own cruel and cowardly heart, you wicked and unprincipled tyrant! In everything you have said of my father, mother, and friends, and of myself, too, you are a liar, from the hat on your head to the dirt undher your feet—a liar, a coward, and a villain!"

The fury of the miscreant was ungovernable: he ran at the still feeble lad, and, by a stroke of his fist, dashed him senseless to the earth. There

were now no large boys in the school to curb his resentment, he therefore kicked him in the back when he fell. Many voices exclaimed in alarm—"Oh, masther! Sir! don't kill him! Oh, Sir! dear, don't kill him! Don't kill poor Jemmy, Sir, an' him still sick!"

"Kill him!" replied the master; "kill him, indeed! Faith, he 'd be no common man who could kill him; he has as many lives in him as a cat! Sure, he can live behind a ditch, wid the faver on his back, widout dying; and he would live if he was stuck on the spire of a steeple."

In the mean time the boy gave no symptoms of returning life, and the master, after desiring a few of the scholars to bring him out to the air, became pale as death with apprehension. He immediately withdrew to his private apartment, which joined the school-room, and sent out his wife to assist in restoring him to animation. With some difficulty this was accomplished. The unhappy boy at once remembered what had just occurred; and the bitter tears gushed from his eyes, as he knelt down, and exclaimed, "Merciful Father of heaven and earth, have pity on me! You see my heart, great God! and that what I did, I did for the best!'

"Avourneen," said the woman, "he's passionate, an' never mind him. Come in an' beg his pardon for callin' him a liar, an' I 'll become spokesman for you myself. Come, acushla, an' I 'll get lave for you to stay in the school still."

"Oh, I 'm hurted!" said the poor youth: "I 'm hurted inwardly—somewhere about the back, and about my ribs!" The pain he felt brought the tears down his pale cheeks. "I wish I was at home!" said he. "I 'll give up all and go home!" The lonely boy then laid his head upon his hands, as he sat on the ground, and indulged in a long burst of sorrow.

"Well," said a manly-looking little fellow, whilst the tears stood in his eyes, "I 'll tell my father this, any how. I know he won't let me come to this school any more. Here, Jemmy, is a piece of my bread, maybe it will do you good."

"I couldn't taste it, Frank dear," said Jemmy; "God bless you! but I couldn't taste it."

"Do," said Frank; "maybe it will bate back the pain."

"Don't ask me, Frank dear," said Jemmy; "I couldn't ate it: I 'm hurted inwardly."

"Bad luck to me!" exclaimed the indignant boy, "if ever my ten toes will darken this school door agin. By the livin' farmer, if they ax me at home to do it, I 'll run away to my uncle's, so I will. Wait, Jemmy, I 'll be big yit; an', be the blessed Gospel that 's about my neck, I 'll give the same masther a shirtful of sore bones, the holy an' blessed minute I 'm able to do it."

Many of the other boys declared that they would acquaint their friends with the master's cruelty to the poor scholar; but Jemmy requested them not to do so, and said that he was determined to return home the moment he should be able to travel.

The affrighted woman could not prevail upon him to seek a reconciliation with her husband, although the expressions of the other scholars induced her to press him to it, even to entreaty. Jemmy arose, and with considerable difficulty reached the Curate's house, found him at home,

and, with tears in his eyes, related to him the atrocious conduct of the master.

"Very well," said this excellent man, "I am glad that I can venture to ride as far as Colonel B——s to-morrow. You must accompany me; for decidedly such bruality cannot be permitted to go unpunished."

Jemmy knew that the Curate was his friend; and although he would not himself have thought of summoning the master to answer for his barbarity, yet he acquiesced in the curate's opinion. He stopped that night in the house of the worthy man to whom Mr. O'Brien had recommended him on his first entering the town. It appeared in the morning, however, that he was unable to walk; the blows which he had received were *then* felt by him to be more dangerous than had been supposed. Mr. O'Brien, on being informed of this, procured a jaunting-car, on which they both sat, and, at an easy pace, reached the Colonel's residence.

The Curate was shown into an ante-room, and Jemmy sat in the hall: the Colonel joined the former in a few minutes. He had been in England and on the Continent, accompanied by his family, for nearly the last three years, but had just returned, in order to take possession of a large property in land and money, to which he succeeded at a very critical moment, for his own estates were heavily encumbered. He was now proprietor of an additional estate, the rent-roll of which was six thousand per annum, and also master of eighty-five thousand pounds in the funds.

Mr. O'Brien, after congratulating him upon his good fortune, introduced the case of our hero as one which, in his opinion, called for the Colonel's interposition as a magistrate.

"I have applied to you, Sir," he proceeded, "rather than to any other of the neighbouring gentlemen, because I think this friendless lad has a peculiar claim upon any good offices you could render him."

"A claim upon me! How is that, Mr. O'Brien?"

"The boy, Sir, is not a native of this province. His father was formerly a tenant of yours, a man, as I have reason to believe, remarkable for good conduct and industry. It appears that his circumstances, so long as he was your tenant, were those of a comfortable independent farmer. If the story which his son relates be true—and I, for one, believe it—his family have been dealt with in a manner unusually cruel and iniquitous. Your present agent, Colonel, who is known in his own neighbourhood by the nickname of *Yellow Sam*, thrust him out of his farm, when his wife was sick, for the purpose of putting into it a man who had married his illegitimate daughter. If this be found a correct account of the transaction, I have no hesitation in saying, that you, Colonel B——, as a gentleman of honour and humanity, will investigate the conduct of your agent, and see justice done to an honest man, who must have been oppressed in your name, and under colour of your authority."

"If my agent has dared to be unjust to a worthy tenant," said the Colonel, "in order to provide for his bastard, by my sacred honour, he shall cease to be an agent of mine! I admit, certainly, that from some circumstances which transpired a few years ago, I have reason to suspect his integrity. That, to be sure, was only so far as he and I were concerned; but, on the other hand, during one or two visits I made to the

estate which he manages, I heard the tenants thank and praise him with much gratitude, and all that sort of thing. There was 'Thank your honour!'—'Long may you reign over us, Sir!'—and, 'Oh, Colonel, you've a mighty good man to your agent!' and so forth. I do not think, Mr. O'Brien, that he has acted so harshly, or that he would dare to do it. Upon my honour, I heard those warm expressions of gratitude from the lips of the tenants themselves."

"If you knew the people in general, Colonel, so well as I do," replied the Curate, "you would admit, that such expressions are often either cuttingly ironical, or the result of fear. You will always find, Sir, that the independent portion of the people have least of this forced dissimulation among them. A dishonest and inhuman agent has in his own hands the irresponsible power of harassing and oppressing the tenantry under him. The class most hateful to the people, are those low wretches who spring up from nothing into wealth, accumulated by dishonesty and rapacity. They are proud, overbearing, and jealous, even to vindictiveness, of the least want of respect. It is to such upstarts that the poorer classes are externally most civil; but it is also such persons whom they most hate and abhor. They flatter them to their faces, 'tis true, even to *nausea;* but they seldom spare them in their absence. Of this very class, I believe, is your agent, Yellow Sam; so that any favourable expressions you may have heard from your tenantry towards him, were most probably the result of dissimulation and fear. Besides, Sir, here is a testimonial from M'Evoy's parish-priest, in which his father is spoken of as an honest, moral, and industrious man."

"If what you say, Mr. O'Brien, be correct," observed the Colonel, "you know the Irish peasantry much better than I do. Decidedly, I have always thought them in conversation exceedingly candid and sincere. With respect to testimonials from priests to landlords in behalf of their tenants, upon my honour I am sick of them. I actually received, about four years ago, such an excellent character of two tenants, as induced me to suppose them worthy of encouragement. But what was the fact? Why, Sir, they were two of the greatest firebrands on my estate, and put both me and my agent to great trouble and expense. No, Sir, I wouldn't give a curse for a priest's testimonial upon such an occasion. These fellows were subsequently convicted of arson on the clearest evidence, and transported."

"Well, Sir, I grant that you may have been misled in that instance. However, from what I've observed, the two great faults of Irish landlords are these:—In the first place, they suffer themselves to remain ignorant of their tenantry; so much so, indeed, that they frequently deny them access and redress when the poor people are anxious to acquaint them with their grievances; for it is usual with landlords to refer them to those very agents against whose cruelty and rapacity they are appealing. This is a *carte blanche* to the agent to trample upon them if he pleases. In the next place, Irish landlords too frequently employ ignorant and needy men to manage their estates; men who have no character, no property, or standing in society, beyond the reputation of being keen, shrewd, and active. These persons, Sir, make fortunes; and what means can they have of accumulating wealth, except by cheating either the landlord or his

tenants, or both? A history of their conduct would be a black catalogue of dishonesty, oppression, and treachery. Respectable men, resident on or near the estate, possessing both character and property, should always be selected for this important trust. But, above all things, the curse of a tenantry is a *per-centage* agent. He racks, and drives, and oppresses, without consideration either of market or produce, in order that his receipts may be ample, and his own income large."

"Why, O'Brien, you appear to be better acquainted with all this sort of thing than I, who am a landed proprietor."

"By the by, Sir, without meaning you any disrespect, it is the landlords of Ireland who know least about the great mass of its inhabitants; and I might also add, about its history, its literature, the manners of the people, their customs, and their prejudices. The peasantry know this, and too often practise upon their ignorance. There is a landlord's *Vade mecum* sadly wanted in Ireland, Colonel."

"Ah! very good, O'Brien, very good! Well, I shall certainly inquire into this case, and if I find that Yellow Sam has been playing the oppressor, out he goes. I am now able to manage him, which I could not readily do before, for, by the by, he had mortgages on my property."

"I would take it, Colonel, as a personal favour, if you would investigate the transaction I have mentioned."

"Undoubtedly I shall, and that very soon. But about this outrage committed against the boy himself? We had better take his informations, and punish the fellow."

"Certainly; I think that is the best way. His conduct to the poor youth has been merciless and detestable. We must put him out of this part of the country."

"Call the lad in. In this case I shall draw up the informations myself, although Gregg usually does that."

Jemmy, assisted by the Curate, entered the room, and the humane Colonel desired him, as he appeared ill, to sit down.

"What is your name?" asked the Colonel.

"James M'Evoy," he replied. "I 'm the son, Sir, of a man who was once a tenant of yours."

"Ay! and pray how did he cease to be a tenant of mine?"

"Why, Sir, your agent, Yallow Sam, put him out of our farm, when my poor mother was on her sick-bed. He chated my father, Sir, out of some money—part of our rent it was, that he didn't give him a receipt for. When my father went to him afterwards for the receipt, Yallow Sam abused him, and called him a rogue, and that, Sir, was what no man ever called my father either before or since. My father, Sir, threatened to tell you about it, and you came to the country soon after; but Yallow Sam got very great wid my father at that time, and sent him to sell bullocks for him about fifty miles off, but when he come back again you had left the country. Thin, Sir, Yallow Sam said nothing till the next half-year's rent became due, whin he came down on my father for all—that is, what he hadn't got the receipt for, and the other gale—and, without any warning in the world, put him out. My father offered to pay all; but he said he was a rogue, and that you had ordered him off the estate. In less than a

week after this he put a man that married a bastard daughter of his own into our house and place. That 's God's truth, Sir; and you 'll find it so, if you inquire into it. It 's a common trick of his to keep back receipts, and make the tenants pay double." *

" Sacred Heaven, O'Brien ! can this be possible ?"

" Your best way, Colonel, is to inquire into it."

" Was not your father able to educate you at home, my boy ?"

" No, Sir. We soon got into poverty after we left your farm ; and another thing, Sir, there was no Latin school in our neighbourhood."

" For what purpose did you become a poor scholar ?"

" Why, Sir, I hoped one day or other to be able to raise my father and mother out of the distress that Yallow Sam brought on us."

" By Heaven ! a noble aim, and a noble sentiment. And what has this d—d fellow of a schoolmaster done to you ?"

" Why, Sir, yesterday when I went back to the school, he abused me, and said that he supposed most of my relations were hanged ; spoke ill of my father; and said that my mother"—Here the tears started to his eyes—he sobbed aloud.

" Go on, and be cool," said the Colonel. " What did he say of your mother ?"

" He said, Sir, that she was never married to my father. I know I was wrong, Sir ; but if it was the king on his throne that said it of my mother, I 'd call him a liar. I called *him* a liar, and a coward, and a villain : ay, Sir, and if I had been able, I would have tramped him under my feet."

The Colonel looked steadily at him, but the open clear eye which the boy turned upon him was full of truth and independence.

" And you will find," said the soldier, " that this spirited defence of your mother will be the most fortunate action of your life. Well; he struck you then, did he ?"

" He knocked me down, Sir, with his fist—then kicked me in the back and sides. I think some of my ribs are broke."

" Ay !—no doubt, no doubt," said the Colonel. " And you were only after recovering from this fever which is so prevalent ?"

" I wasn't a week out of it, Sir."

" Well, my boy, we shall punish him for you."

" Sir would you hear me for a word or two, if it would be pleasing to you ?"

" Speak on," said the Colonel.

" I would rather change his punishment to—I would—that is—if it would be agreeable to you—It 's this, Sir—I wouldn't throuble you now against the master, if you 'd be pleased to rightify my father, and punish Yallow Sam. Oh, Sir, for God's sake, put my heart-broken father into his farm again ! If you would, Sir, I could shed my blood, or lay down my life for you, or for any belonging to you. I 'm but a poor boy, Sir,

* This is the fact. The individual here alluded to, frequently kept back receipts when receiving rents, under pretence of hurry, and afterwards compelled the tenants to pay the same gale twice !

low and humble; but they say there 's a greater Being than the greatest in this world, that listens to the just prayers of the poor and friendless. I was never happy, Sir, since we left it—neither was any of us; and when we 'd sit cowld and hungry, about our hearth, we used to be talking of the pleasant days we spent in it, till the tears would be smothered in curses against him that put us out of it. Oh, Sir, if you could know all that a poor and honest family suffers, when they are thrown into distress by want of feeling in their landlords, or by the dishonesty of agents, you would consider my father's case. I 'm his favourite son, Sir, and good right have I speak to for him. If you could know the sorrow, the misery, the drooping down of the spirits, that lies upon the countenances and the hearts of such people, you wouldn't, as a man and a Christian, think it below you to spread happiness and contentment among them again. In the morning they rise to a day of hardship, no matter how bright and cheerful it may be to others—nor is there any hope of a brighter day for *them;* and at night they go to their hard beds to strive to sleep away their hunger in spite of cowld and want. If you could see how the father of a family, after striving to bear up, sinks down at last; if you could see the look he gives at the childre that he would lay down his heart's blood for, when they sit naked and hungry about him; and the mother, too, with her kind word and sorrowful smile, proud of them in all their destitution, but her heart breaking silently all the time, her face wasting away, her eye dim, and her strength gone!—Sir, make one such family happy—for all this has been in my father's house! Give us back our light spirits, our pleasant days, and our cheerful hearts again! We lost them through the villany of your agent. Give them back to us, for you *can* do it; but you can *never* pay us for what we suffered. Give us, Sir, our farm, our green fields, our house, and every spot and nook that we had before. We love the place, Sir, for its own sake;—it is the place of our fathers, and our hearts are in it. I often think I see the smooth river that runs through it, and the meadows that I played in when I was a child;—the glen behind our house, the mountains that rose before us when we left the door, the thorn-bush at the garden, the hazels in the glen, the little bleach-green beside the river—Oh, Sir, don't blame me for crying, for they are all before my eyes, in my ears, and in my heart! Many a summer evening have I gone to the march-ditch of the farm that my father 's now in, and looked at the place I loved, till the tears blinded me, and I asked it as a favour of God to restore us to it! Sir, we are in great poverty at home; before God we are; and my father's heart is breaking."

The Colonel drew his breath deeply, rubbed his hands, and as he looked at the fine countenance of the boy—expressing, as it did, enthusiasm and sorrow—his eye lightened with a gleam of indignation. It could not be against the poor scholar; no, gentle reader, but against his own agent.

"O'Brien," said he, "what do you think? And this noble boy is the son of a man who belongs to a class of which I am ignorant! By Heaven, we landlords are, I fear, a guilty race."

"Not all, Sir," replied the Curate. "There are noble exceptions among them; their faults are more the faults of omission than commission."

"Well, well, no matter. Come, I will draw up the informations against this man; afterwards I have something to say to you, my boy," he added, addressing Jemmy, "that will not, I trust, be unpleasant."

He then drew up the informations as strongly as he could word them, after which Jemmy deposed to their truth and accuracy, and the Colonel, rubbing his hands again, said—

"I will have the fellow secured. When you go into town, Mr. O'Brien, I 'll thank you to call on Meares, and hand him these. He will lodge the miscreant in limbo this very night."

Jemmy then thanked him, and was about to withdraw, when the Colonel desired him to remain a little longer.

"Now," said he, "your father has been treated inhumanly, I believe; but no matter. That is not the question. Your sentiments, and conduct, and your affection for your parents, are noble, my boy. At present, I say, the question is not whether the history of your father's wrongs be true or false; you, at least, *believe* it to be true. From this forward—but by the by, I forgot; how could your becoming a poor scholar relieve your parents?"

"I intended to become a priest, Sir, and then to help them."

"Ay! so I thought; and, provided your father were restored to his farm, would you be still disposed to become a priest?"

"I would, Sir; next to helping my father, that is what I wish to be."

"O'Brien, what would it cost to prepare him respectably for the priesthood?—I mean, to defray his expenses until he completes his preparatory education, in the first place, and afterwards during his residence in Maynooth?"

"I think two hundred pounds, Sir, would do it easily and respectably."

"I do not think it would. However, do you send him—but first let me ask what progress he has already made?"

"He has read—in fact he *is* nearly prepared to enter Maynooth. His progress has been very rapid."

"Put him to some respectable boarding-school for a year; then let him enter Maynooth, and I will bear the expense. But remember I do not adopt this course in consequence of his father's history. Not I, by Jupiter; I do it on his own account. He is a noble boy, and full of fine qualities, if they be not nipped by neglect and poverty. I loved my father myself, and fought a duel on his account; and I honour the son who has spirit to defend his absent parent."

"This is a most surprising turn in the boy's fortunes, Colonel."

"He deserves it. A soldier, Mr. O'Brien, is not without his enthusiasm, nor can he help admiring it in others, when nobly and virtuously directed. To see a boy in the midst of poverty, encountering the hardships and difficulties of life, with the hope of raising up his parents from distress to independence, has a touch of sublimity in it."

"Ireland, Colonel, abounds with instances of similar virtue, brought out, probably, into fuller life and vigour by the sad changes and depres-

sions which are weighing down the people. In her glens, on her bleak mountain sides, and in her remotest plains, such examples of pure affection, uncommon energy, and humble heroism, are to be seen; but, unfortunately, few persons of rank or observation mingle with the Irish people, and their many admirable qualities pass away without being recorded in the literature of their country. They are certainly a strange people, Colonel, almost an anomaly in the history of the human race. They are the only people who can rush out from the very virtues of private life to the perpetration of crimes at which we shudder. There is, to be sure, an outcry about their oppression; but that is wrong. Their indigence and ignorance are rather the result of neglect;—of neglect, Sir, from the government of the country—from the earl to the squireen. They have been taught little that is suitable to their stations and duties in life, either as tenants who cultivate our lands, or as members of moral or Christian society."

"Well, well: I believe what you say is too true. But touching the records of virtue in humble life, pray who would record it when nothing goes down now-a-days but what is either monstrous or fashionable?"

"Very true, Colonel; yet in my humble opinion, a virtuous Irish peasant is far from being so low a character as a profligate man of rank."

"Well, well, well! Come, O'Brien, we will drop the subject. In the meantime, touching this boy, as I said, he must be looked to, for he has that in him which ought not to be neglected. We shall now see that this d—d pedagogue be punished for his cruelty."

The worthy Colonel in a short time dismissed poor Jemmy with an exulting heart; but not until he had placed a sufficient sum in the Curate's hands for enabling him to make a respectable appearance. Medical advice was also procured for him, by which he sooner overcame the effects of his master's brutality.

On their way home Jemmy related to his friend the conversation which he had had with his Bishop in the shed, and the kind interest which that gentleman had taken in his situation and prospects. Mr. O'Brien told him that the Bishop was an excellent man, possessing much discrimination and benevolence; "and so," said he, "is the Protestant clergyman who accompanied him. They have both gone among the people during this heavy visitation of disease and famine, administering advice and assistance; restraining them from those excesses which they sometimes commit, when, driven by hunger, they attack provision-carts, bakers' shops, or the houses of farmers who are known to possess a stock of meal or potatoes. God knows, it is an excusable kind of robbery; yet it is right to restrain them."

"It is a pleasant thing, Sir, to see clergymen of every religion working together to make the people happy."

"It is certainly so," replied the Curate; "and I am bound to say, in justice to the Protestant clergy, that there is no class of men in Ireland, James, who do *so much* good without distinction of creed or party. They are generally kind and charitable to the poor; so are their wives and daughters. I have often known them to cheer the sick-bed—to

assist the widow and the orphan—to advise and admonish the profligate, and, in some instances, even to reclaim them. But now about your own prospects; I think you should go and see your family as soon as your health permits you."

"I would give my right hand," replied Jemmy, "just to see them, if it was only for five minutes: but I cannot go. I vowed that I would never enter my native parish until I should become a Catholic clergyman. I vowed that, Sir, to God—and with his assistance I will keep my vow."

"Well," said the curate, "you are right. And now let me give you a little advice. In the first place, learn to speak as correctly as you can; lay aside the vulgarisms of conversation peculiar to the common people; and speak precisely as you would write. By the by, you acquitted yourself to admiration with the Colonel. A little stumbling there was in the beginning; but you got over it. You see, James, the force of truth and simplicity. I could scarcely restrain my tears while you spoke."

"If I had not been in earnest, Sir, I could never have spoken as I did."

"You never could. Truth, James, is the foundation of all eloquence; he who knowingly speaks what is not true, may dazzle and perplex; but he will never touch with that power and pathos which spring from truth. Fiction is successful only by borrowing her habiliments. Now, James, for a little more advice. Don't let the idea of having been a poor scholar deprive you of self-respect; neither let your unexpected turn of fortune cause you to forget what you have suffered. Hold a middle course; be firm and independent; without servility on the one hand, or vanity on the other. You have also too much good sense, and, I hope, too much religion, to ascribe what this day has brought forth in your behalf, to any other cause than God. It has pleased him to raise you from misery to ease and comfort; to him, therefore, be it referred, and to him be your thanks and prayers directed. You owe him much, for you now can perceive the value of what he has done for you! May his name be blessed!"

Jemmy was deeply affected by the kindness of his friend, for such, in friendship's truest sense, was he to him. He expressed the obligations which he owed him, and promised to follow the excellent advice he had just received.

The schoolmaster's conduct to the poor scholar had, before the close of the day on which it occurred, been known through the parish. Thady O'Rorke, who had but just recovered from the epidemic, felt so bitterly exasperated at the outrage, that he brought his father to the parish priest, to whom he gave a detailed account of all that our hero and the poorer children of the school had suffered. In addition to this, he went among the more substantial farmers of the neighbourhood, whose co-operation he succeeded in obtaining, for the laudable purpose of driving the tyrant out of the parish.

Jemmy, who still lived at the "House of Entertainment," on hearing what they intended to do, begged Mr. O'Brien to allow him, provided the master should be removed from the school, to decline prosecuting him.

"He has been cruel to me, no doubt," he added; "still I cannot forget that his cruelty has been the means of changing my condition in life so

much for the better. If he is put out of the parish it will be punishment enough; and, to say the truth, Sir, I can *now* forgive everybody. Maybe, had I been still *neglected* I might punish him; but, in the meantime, to show him and the world that I didn't deserve his severity, I forgive him."

Mr. O'Brien was not disposed to check a sentiment that did the boy's heart so much honour; he waited on the Colonel the next morning, acquainted him with Jemmy's wishes, and the indictment was quashed immediately after the schoolmaster's removal from his situation.

Our hero's personal appearance was by this time incredibly changed for the better. His countenance, naturally expressive of feeling, firmness, and intellect, now appeared to additional advantage; so did his whole person, when dressed in a decent suit of black. No man acquainted with life can be ignorant of the improvement which genteel apparel produces in the carriage, tone of thought, and principles of an individual. It gives a man confidence, self-respect, and a sense of equality with his companions; it inspires him with energy, independence, delicacy of sentiment, courtesy of manner, and elevation of language. The face becomes manly, bold, and free; the brow open, and the eye clear; there is no slinking through narrow lanes and back streets: but, on the contrary, the smoothly dressed man steps out with a determination not to spare the earth, or to walk as if he trod on eggs or razors. No; he brushes onward; is the first to accost his friends; gives a careless bow to this, a bluff nod to that, and a patronising "how d'ye do" to a third, who is worse dressed than himself. Trust me, kind reader, that good clothes are calculated to advance a man in life nearly as well as good principles, especially in a world like this, where external appearance is taken as the exponent of what is beneath it.

Jemmy, by the advice of his friend, now waited upon the Bishop, who was much surprised at the uncommon turn of fortune which had taken place in his favour. He also expressed his willingness to help him forward, as far as lay in his power, towards the attainment of his wishes. In order to place the boy directly under suitable patronage, Mr. O'Brien suggested that the choice of the school should be left to the Bishop. This, perhaps, flattered him a little, for who is without his weaknesses? A school near the metropolis was accordingly fixed upon, to which Jemmy, now furnished with a handsome outfit, was accordingly sent. There we will leave him, reading with eagerness and assiduity, whilst we return to look after Colonel B. and his agent.

One morning after James's departure, the Colonel's servant waited upon Mr. O'Brien with a note from his master, intimating a wish to see him. He lost no time in waiting upon that gentleman, who was then preparing to visit the estate which he had so long neglected.

"I am going," said he, "to see how my agent, Yellow Sam, as they call him, and my tenants agree. It is my determination, Mr. O'Brien, to investigate the circumstances attending the removal of our *protégé's* father. I shall, moreover, look closely into the state and feelings of my tenants in general. It is probable I shall visit many of them, and certain that I will inquire into the character of this man."

"It is better late than never, Colonel; but still, though I am a friend to the people, yet I would recommend you to be guided by great caution, and the evidence of respectable and disinterested men only. You must not certainly entertain all the complaints you may hear, without clear proof, for I regret to say, that too many of the idle and political portion of the peasantry are apt to throw the blame of their own folly and ignorance—yes, and of their crimes, also—upon those who in no way have occasioned either their poverty or their wickedness. They are frequently apt to consider themselves oppressed, if concessions are not made, to which they, as idle and indolent men, who neglect their own business, have no fair claim. Bear this in mind, Colonel—be cool, use discrimination, take your proofs from others besides the parties concerned, or their friends, and, depend upon it, you will arrive at the truth."

"O'Brien, you would make an excellent agent."

"I have studied the people, Sir, and know them. I have breathed the atmosphere of their prejudices, habits, manners, customs, and superstitions. I have felt them all myself, as they feel them; but I trust I have got above their influence where it is evil, for there are many fine touches of character among them, which I should not willingly part with. No, Sir, I should make a bad agent, having no capacity for transacting business. I could direct and overlook, but nothing more."

"Well, then, I shall set out to-morrow; and in the meantime, permit me to say that I am deeply sensible of your kindness in pointing out my duty as an Irish landlord, conscious that I have too long neglected it."

"Kindness, Colonel, is the way to the Irish heart. There is but one man in Ireland who can make an Irishman ungrateful, and that is his priest. I regret that in times of political excitement, and especially during electioneering struggles, the interference of the clergy produces disastrous effects upon the moral feelings of the people. When a tenant meets the landlord whom he has deserted in the critical moment of the contest—the landlord to whom he has solemnly promised his support, and who, perhaps, as a member of the legislature, has advocated his claims and his rights, and who, probably, has been kind and indulgent to him—I say, when he meets him afterwards, his shufflings, excuses, and evasions are grievous. He is driven to falsehood and dissimulation in explaining his conduct; he expresses his repentance, curses himself for his ingratitude, promises well for the future, but seldom or never can be prevailed upon to state candidly that he acted in obedience to the priest. In some instances, however, he admits this, and inveighs bitterly against his interference—but this is only whilst in the presence of his landlord. I think, Colonel, that no clergyman, set apart as he is for the concerns of a better world, should become a firebrand in the secular pursuits and turmoils of this."

"I wish, Mr. O'Brien, that every clergyman of your church resembled you, and acted up to your sentiments: our common country would be the better for it."

"I endeavour to act, Sir, as a man who has purely spiritual duties to perform. It is not for us to be agitated and inflamed by the political passions and animosities of the world. Our lot is differently cast, and

we ought to abide by it. The priest and politician can no more agree than good and evil. I speak with respect to *all* churches."

"And so do I."

"What stay do you intend to make, Colonel?"

"I think about a month. I shall visit some of my old friends there, from whom I expect a history of the state and feelings of the country."

"You will hear both sides of the question before you act?"

"Certainly. I have written to my agent to say that I shall look very closely into my own affairs on *this* occasion. I thought it fair to give him notice."

"Well, Sir, I wish you all success."

"Farewell, Mr. O'Brien; I shall see you immediately after my return."

The Colonel performed his journey by slow stages, until he reached "the hall of his fathers,"—for it was such, although he had not for years resided in it. It presented the wreck of a fine old mansion, situated within a crescent of stately beeches, whose moss-covered and ragged trunks gave symptons of decay and neglect. The lawn had been once beautiful, and the demesne a noble one; but that which blights the industry of the tenant—the curse of absenteeism—had also left the marks of ruin stamped upon every object around him. The lawn was little better than a common; the pond was thick with weeds and sluggish water-plants, that almost covered its surface; and a light elegant bridge, that spanned a river which ran before the house, was also moss-grown and dilapidated. The hedges were mixed up with briers, the gates broken, or altogether removed, the fields were rank with the ruinous luxuriance of weeds, and the grass-grown avenues spoke of solitude and desertion. The still appearance, too, of the house itself, and the absence of smoke from its time-tinged chimneys—all told a tale which constitutes one, perhaps the *greatest*, portion of Ireland's misery! Even then he did not approach it with the intention of residing there during his sojourn in the country. It was not habitable, nor had it been so for years. The road by which he travelled lay near it, and he could not pass without looking upon the place where a long line of gallant ancestors had succeeded each other, lived their span, and disappeared in their turn.

He contemplated it for some time in a kind of reverie. There it stood, sombre and silent;—its gray walls mouldering away—its windows dark and broken;—like a man forsaken by the world, compelled to bear the storms of life without the hand of a friend to support him, though age and decay render him less capable of enduring them. For a moment fancy repeopled it;—again the stir of life, pastime, mirth, and hospitality echoed within its walls; the train of his long-departed relatives returned; the din of rude and boisterous enjoyment peculiar to the times; the cheerful tumult of the hall at dinner; the family feuds and festivities; the vanities and the passions of those who now slept in dust;—all—all came before him once more, and played their part in the vision of the moment!

As he walked on, the flitting wing of a bat struck him lightly in its flight; he awoke from the remembrances which crowded on him, and,

resuming his journey, soon arrived at the inn of the nearest town, where he stopped that night. The next morning he saw his agent for a short time, but declined entering upon business. For a few days more he visited most of the neighbouring gentry, from whom he received sufficient information to satisfy him, that neither he himself nor his agent was popular among his tenantry. Many flying reports of the agent's dishonesty and tyranny were mentioned to him, and in every instance he took down the names of the parties, in order to ascertain the truth. M'Evoy's case had occurred more than ten years before, but he found that the remembrance of the poor man's injury was strongly and bitterly retained in the recollections of the people—a circumstance which extorted from the blunt, but somewhat sentimental soldier, a just observation :— "I think," said he, "that there are no people in the world who remember either an injury or a kindness so long as the Irish."

When the tenants were apprised of his presence among them, they experienced no particular feeling upon the subject. During all his former visits to his estate, he appeared merely the creature and puppet of his agent, who never acted the bully, nor tricked himself out in his brief authority more imperiously than he did before him. The knowledge of this damped them, and rendered any expectations of redress or justice from the landlord a matter not to be thought of.

"If he wasn't so great a man," they observed, "who thinks it below him to speak to his tenants, or hear their complaints, there 'ud be some hope. But that rip of hell, Yallow Sam, can wind him round his finger like a thread, an' does, too. There 's no use in thinkin' to petition him, or to lodge a complaint againt Stony Heart, for the first thing he 'd do 'ud be to put it into the yallow-boy's hands, an' thin, God be marciful to thim that 'ud complain. No, no ; the best way is to wait till Sam's masther * takes him ; an' who knows but that 'ud be sooner nor we think."

"They say," another would reply, "that the Colonel is a good gintleman for all that, an' that if he could *once* know the truth, he 'd pitch the 'yallow boy' to the 'ould boy.'"

No sooner was it known by his tenantry that the head landlord was disposed to redress their grievances, and hear their complaints, than the smothered attachment, which long neglect had nearly extinguished, now burst forth with uncommon power.

"Augh! by this an' by that, the thrue blood 's in him still. The rale gintleman to dale wid, for ever! We knew he only wanted to come at the thruth, an' thin he 'd back us agin the villain that harrished us! To the divil wid skamin' upstarts, that hasn't the ould blood in thim! What are they but sconces an' chates, every one o' thim, barrin' an odd one, for a wondher!"

The Colonel's estate now presented a scene of gladness and bustle. Every person who felt in the slightest degree aggrieved, got his petition drawn up ; and, but that we fear our sketch is already too long, we could gratify the reader's curiosity by submitting a few of them. It is

* The devil ;—a familiar name for him when mentioned in connexion with a villain.

sufficient to say, that they came to him in every shape—in all the variety of diction that the poor English language admits of—in the schoolmaster's best copy-hand, and choicest sesquipedalianism of pedantry—in the severer, but more Scriptural terms of the parish clerk—in the engrossing hand and legal phrase of the attorney—in the military form, evidently redolent of the shrewd old pensioner—and in the classical style of the young priest;—for each and all of the foregoing were enlisted in the cause of those who had petitions to send in "to the Colonel himself, God bless him!"

Early in the morning of the day on which the Colonel had resolved to compare the complaints of his tenantry with the character which his agent gave him of the complainants, he sent for the former, and the following dialogue took place between them.

"Good morning, Mr. Carson! Excuse me for requesting your presence to-day earlier than usual. I have taken it into my head to know something of my own tenantry, and as they have pestered me with petitions, and letters, and complaints, I am anxious to have your opinion, as you know them better than I do."

"Before we enter on business, Colonel, allow me to inquire if you feel relieved of that bilious attack you complained of the day before yesterday? I'm of a bilious habit myself, and know something about the management of digestion!"

"A good digestion is an excellent thing, Carson; as for me, I drank too much claret with my friend B——y; and there's the secret. I don't like cold wines, they never agree with me."

"Nor do I; they are not constitutional. Your father was celebrated for his wines, Colonel: I remember an anecdote told me by Captain Ferguson—by the by, do you know where Ferguson could be found, now, Sir?"

"Not I. What wines do *you* drink, Carson?"

"A couple of glasses of sherry, Sir, at dinner; and about ten o'clock, a glass of brandy and water."

"Carson, you are sober and *prudent*. Well, about these cursed petitions; you must help me to dispose of them. Why, a man would think by the tenor of them, that these tenants of mine are ground to dust by a tyrant."

"Ah! Colonel, you know little about these fellows. They would make black white. Go and take a ride, Sir, return about four o'clock, and I will have everything as it ought to be."

"I wish to heaven, Carson, I had your talents for business. Do you think my tenants attached to me?"

"Attached! Sir, they are ready to cut your throat or mine, on the first convenient opportunity. You could not conceive their knavishness and dishonesty, except you happened to be an agent for a few years."

"So I have been told, and I am resolved to remove every dishonest tenant from my estate. Is there not a man, for instance, called Brady? He has sent me a long-winded petition here. What do you think of him?"

"Show me the petition, Colonel."

"I cannot lay my hand on it just now; but you shall see it. In the mean time what's your opinion of the fellow?"

"Brady! Why I know the man particularly well. He is one of my favourites. What the deuce could the fellow petition about, though? I promised the other day to renew his lease for him."

"Oh, then, if he be a favourite of yours, his petition may go to the devil, I suppose? Is the man honest?"

"Remarkably so; and has paid his rents very punctually. He is one of our safest tenants."

"Do you know a man called Cullen?"

"The most litigious scoundrel on the estate."

"Indeed! Oh, then, we must look into the merits of *his* petition, as he is *not* honest. Had he been honest like Brady, Carson, I should have dismissed it."

"Cullen, Sir, is a dangerous fellow. Do you know, that rascal has charged me with keeping back his receipts, and with making him pay double rent!—ha, ha, ha! Upon my honour, it 's fact."

"The scoundrel! We shall sift him to some purpose, however."

"If you take my advice, Sir, you will send him about his business; for if it be once known that you listen to malicious petitions, my authority over such villains as Cullen is lost."

"Well, I set him aside for the present. Here 's a long list of others, all of whom have been oppressed, forsooth. Is there a man called M'Evoy on my estate?—Dominick M'Evoy, I think."

"M'Evoy! Why that rascal, Sir, has not been your tenant for ten years! *His* petition, Colonel, is a key to the nature of their grievances in general."

"I believe you, Carson—most implicitly do I *believe* that. Well, about that rascal?"

"Why, it is so long since, that upon my honour, I cannot exactly remember the circumstances of his misconduct. He ran away."

"Who is in his farm now, Carson?"

"A very decent man, Sir. One Jackson, an exceedingly worthy, honest, industrious fellow. I take some credit to myself for bringing Jackson on your estate."

"Is Jackson married? Has he a family?"

"Married! Let me see! Why—yes—I *believe* he is. Oh, by the by, now I think of it, he *is* married, and to a very respectable woman, too. Certainly, I remember—she usually accompanies him when he pays his rents."

"Then your system must be a good one, Carson; you weed out the idle and profligate, to replace them by the honest and industrious?"

"Precisely so, Sir; that is my system."

"Yet there are agents who invert your system in some cases; who drive out the honest and industrious, and encourage the idle and profligate; who connive at them, Carson, and fill the estates they manage with their own dependents, or relatives, as the case may be. You have been always opposed to this, and I'm glad to hear it."

"No man, Colonel B——, filling the situation which I have the honour

to hold under you, could study your interests with greater zeal and assiduity. God knows, I have had so many quarrels, and feuds, and wranglings, with these fellows, in order to squeeze money out of them to meet your difficulties, that, upon my honour, I think if it required five dozen oaths to hang me, they could be procured upon your estate. An agent, Colonel, who is faithful to the landlord, is seldom popular with the tenants."

"I can't exactly see that, Carson; and I have known an unpopular landlord rendered highly popular by the judicious management of an enlightened and honest agent, who took no bribes, Carson, and who neither extorted from nor ground the tenantry under him—something like a counterpart of yourself. But you may be right in general."

"Is there anything particular, Colonel, in which I can assist you now?"

"Not now. I was anxious to hear the character of those fellows from you who know them. Come down about eleven or twelve o'clock; these petitioners will be assembled, and you may be able to assist me."

"Colonel, remember I forewarn you, that you are plunging into a mesh of difficulties, which you will never be able to disentangle. Leave the fellows to me, Sir; I know how to deal with them. Besides, upon my honour, you are not equal to it, in point of health. You look ill. Pray allow me to take home their papers, and I shall have all clear and satisfactory before two o'clock. They know my method, Sir."

"They do, Carson, they *do;* but I am anxious they should also know *mine.* Besides, it will amuse me, for I want excitement. Good day, for the present; you will be down about twelve, or one at the farthest."

"Certainly, Sir. Good morning, Colonel."

The agent was too shrewd a man not to perceive that there were touches of cutting irony in some of the Colonel's expressions, which he did not like. There was a dryness, too, in the tone of his voice and words, blended with a copiousness of good humour, which, taken altogether, caused him to feel uncomfortable. He could have wished the Colonel at the devil; yet had the said Colonel never been more familiar in his life, nor, with one or two exceptions, readier to agree with almost every observation made to him.

"Well," thought he, "*he* may act as he pleases; *I* have feathered my nest, at all events, and disregard him."

Colonel B——, in fact, ascertained with extreme regret, that something was necessary to be done, to secure the good-will of his tenants; that the conduct of his agent had been marked by rapacity and bribery almost incredible. He had exacted from the tenantry in general the performance of duty-labour to such an extent, that his immense agricultural farms were managed with little expense to himself. If a poor man's corn were drop ripe, or his hay in a precarious state, or his turf undrawn, he must suffer his oats, hay, and turf, to be lost, in order to secure the crops of the agent. If he had spirit to refuse, he must expect to become a martyr to his resentment. In renewing leases his extortions were exorbitant; ten, thirty, forty, and fifty guineas he claimed as a fee for his favour, according to the ability of the party; yet this was quite distinct from the renewal fine, and went into his own pocket. When such "glove

money" was not to be had, he would accept of a cow or horse, to which he usually made a point to take a fancy; or he wanted to purchase a firkin of butter at that particular time; and the poor people usually made every sacrifice to avoid his vengeance. It is due to Colonel B—— to say, that he acted in the investigation of his agent's conduct with the strictest honour and impartiality. He scrutinised every statement thoroughly, pleaded for him as temperately as he could; found, or pretended to find, extenuating motives for his most indefensible proceedings; but all would not do. The cases were so clear and evident against him, even in the opinion of the neighbouring gentry, who had been for years looking upon the system of selfish misrule which he practised, that at length the generous Colonel's blood boiled with indignation in his veins at the contemplation of his villany. He accused himself bitterly for neglecting his duties as a landlord, and felt both remorse and shame for having wasted his time, health, and money, in the fashionable dissipation of London and Paris; whilst a cunning, unprincipled upstart played the vampire with his tenants, and turned his estate into a scene of oppression and poverty. Nor was this all; he had been endeavouring to bring the property more and more into his own clutches, a point which he would ultimately have gained, had not the Colonel's late succession to so large a fortune enabled him to meet his claims.

At one o'clock the tenants were all assembled about the inn door, where the Colonel had resolved to hold his little court. The agent himself soon arrived, as did several other gentlemen, the Colonel's friends, who knew the people, and could speak to their character.

The first man called was Dominick M'Evoy. No sooner was his name uttered, than a mild, poor-looking man, rather advanced in years, came forward.

"I beg your pardon, Colonel," said Carson, "here is some mistake; this man is not one of your tenants. You may remember I told you so this morning."

"I remember it," replied the Colonel; "this is 'the rascal' you spoke of—is he not? M'Evoy," the Colonel proceeded, "you will reply to my questions with strict truth. You will state nothing but what has occurred between you and my agent; you must not even turn a circumstance in your own favour, nor against Mr. Carson, by either adding to, or taking away from it, more or less than the truth. I say this to you, and to all present; for, upon my honour, I shall dismiss the first case in which I discover a falsehood."

"Wid the help o' the Almighty, Sir, I'll state nothing but the bare thruth."

"How long are you off my estate?"

"Ten years, your honour, or a little more."

"How came you to run away out of your farm?"

"Run away, your honour! God, he knows, I didn't run away, Sir. The whole counthry knows that."

"Yes, run away! Mr. Carson, here, stated to me this morning, that you ran away. He is a gentleman of integrity, and would not state a falsehood."

"I beg your pardon, Colonel, not positively. I told you I did not exactly remember the circumstances; I said I thought so; but I may be wrong, for, indeed, my memory of facts is not good. M'Evoy, however, is a very *honest man*, and I have no doubt will state everything as it happened, fairly and without malice."

"An honest '*rascal*,' I suppose you mean, Mr. Carson," said the Colonel, bitterly. "Proceed, M'Evoy."

M'Evoy stated the circumstances precisely as the reader is already acquainted with them; after which the Colonel turned round to his agent and inquired what he had to say in reply.

"You cannot expect, Colonel B——," he replied, "that with such a multiplicity of business on my hands, I could remember, after a lapse of ten years, the precise state of this particular case. Perhaps I may have some papers, a memorandum or so, at home, that may throw light upon it. At present I can only say, that the man failed in his rents, I ejected him, and put a better tenant in his place. I cannot see a crime in that."

"Plase your honour," replied M'Evoy, "I can prove by them that's standin' to the fore this minute, as well as by this written Affidavit, Sir, that I offered him the full rint, havin', at the same time, as God is my judge, ped part of it afore."

"That is certainly false—an untrue and malicious statement," said Carson. "I now remember that the cause of my resentment—yes, of my just resentment against you, was your reporting that I received your rent and withheld your receipt."

"Then," observed the Colonel, "there has been *more than one* charge of that nature brought against you? You mentioned *another* to me this morning, if I mistake not."

"I have made my oath, your honour, of the thruth of it; an' here is a dacent man, Sir, a Protestant, that lent me the money, an' was present when I offered it to him. Mr. Smith, come forrid, Sir, an' spake up for the poor man, as you 're always willin' to do."

"I object to *his* evidence," said Carson: "he is my open enemy."

"I am your enemy, Mr. Carson, or rather the enemy of your corruption and want of honesty," said Smith: "but, as you say, an *open* one. I scorn to say behind your back what I wouldn't say to your face. Right well you know I was present when he tendered you his rent. I lent him part of it. But why did you and your bailiffs turn him out, when his wife was on her sick bed? Allowing that he could not pay his rent, was that any reason you should do so barbarous an act as to drag a woman from her sick bed, and she at the point of death? But we know your reasons for it."

"Gentlemen," said the Colonel, "pray what character do M'Evoy and Smith here bear in the country?"

"We have known them both for years to be honest, conscientious men," said those whom he addressed: "such is their character, and in our opinion they well deserve it."

"God bless you, gintlemen!" said M'Evoy—"God bless your honours, for your kind words! I 'm sure, for my own part, I hope I 'll always desarve your good opinion, although but a poor man *now*, God help me!"

" Pray, who occupies the farm at present, Mr. Carson?"

" The man I mentioned to you this morning, Sir. His name is Jackson."

" And pray, Mr. Carson, who is his wife?"

" Oh, by the by, Colonel, that 's a little too close! I see the gentlemen smile; but they know I must beg to decline answering that question — not that it matters much. We have all sown our wild oats in our time—myself as well as another—ha, ha, ha!"

" The fact, under other circumstances," observed the Colonel, " could never draw an inquiry from me; but as it is connected with, or probably has occasioned, a gross, unfeeling, and an unjust act of oppression towards an honest man, I therefore alluded to it, as exhibiting the motives from which you acted. She is your illegitimate daughter, Sir!"

" She 's one o' the baker's dozen o' them, plase your honour," observed a humorous little Presbyterian, with a sarcastic face, and sharp northern accent—" for feth, Sir, for my part, A thenk he hes one on every hill head. A'll count, your honour, on my fingers a roun' half-dozen, aall on your estate, Sir, featherin' their nests as fast as they can."

" Is this Jackson a good tenant, Mr. Carson?"

" I gave you his character this morning, Colonel B."

" Hout, Colonel!" said the Presbyterian, " deil a penny rent the man pays, at aall, at aall. A 'll swear A hev it from Jackson's own lips. He made him a Bailey, Sir; he suts rent free. Ask the man, Sir, for his receipts, an' A 'll warrant the truth will come out."

" I have secured Jackson's attendance," said the Colonel: " let him be called in."

The man in a few minutes entered.

" Jackson," said the Colonel, " how long is it since you paid Mr. Carson here any rent?"

Jackson looked at Carson for his cue; but the Colonel rose up indignantly: " Fellow!" he proceeded, " if you tamper with me a single moment, you shall find Mr. Carson badly able to protect you. If you speak falsehood, be it at your peril."

" By Jing, Sir," said Jackson, " A 'll say nothin' aginst my father-in-laa, an' A don't care who teks it well or ull. A was jist tekin' a *gun* * with a fren' or two—an' d—— me, A say, A 'll stick to my father-in-laa, for he hes stuck to me."

" You appear to be a hardened drunken wretch," observed the Colonel. " Will you be civil enough to show your last receipt for rent?"

" Wull A show it? A dono whether A wull or not, nor A dono whether A hev it or not; but ef aal the receipts in Europe wur burnt, d—— my blood, but A 'll stick to my father-in-laa."

" Your father-in-law may be proud of you," said the Colonel.

" By h——, A 'll back you en that," said the fellow nodding his head, and looking round him confidently. " By h——, A say that, too!"

" And I am sorry to be compelled to add," continued the Colonel, " that you may be equally proud of your father-in-law."

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* A half-tumbler of punch.

"A say, right agane! D—— me, bit A 'll back that too!" and he nodded confidently, and looked around the room once more. "A wull; d—— my blood, bit no man can say agane it. A 'm married to his daughther; an', by the sun that shines, A 'll still stan' up for my father-in-laa."

"Mr. Carson," said the Colonel, "can you disprove these facts? Can you show that you did not expel M'Evoy from his farm, and put the husband of your illegitimate daughter into it? That you did not receive his rent, decline giving him a receipt, and afterwards compel him to pay twice, because he could not produce the receipt which you withheld?"

"Gentlemen," said Carson, not directly replying to the Colonel, "there is a base conspiracy got up against me; and I can perceive, moreover, that there is evidently some unaccountable intention on the part of Colonel B. to insult my feelings, and injure my character. When paltry circumstances that have occurred above ten years ago, are raked up in my teeth, I have little to say, but that it proves how very badly off the Colonel must have been for an imputation against my conduct and discretion as his agent, since he finds himself compelled to hunt so far back for a charge."

"That is by no means the heaviest charge I have to bring against you," replied the Colonel. "There is no lack of them; nor shall you be able to complain that they are not *recent*, as well as of longer standing. Your conduct in the case of poor honest M'Evoy here, is black and iniquitous. He must be restored to his farm, but by other hands than yours, and that ruffian instantly expelled from it. From this moment, Sir, you cease to be my agent. You have betrayed the confidence I reposed in you; you have misled me as to the character of my tenants; you have been a deceitful, cringing, cunning, selfish, and rapacious tyrant. My people you have ground to dust; my property you have lessened in value nearly one-half, and for your motives in doing this, I refer you to certain transactions and legal documents which passed between us. There is nothing cruel or mercenary which you did not practise, in order to enrich yourself. The whole tenor of your conduct is before me. Your profligacy is not only discovered, but already proved; and you played those villanous pranks, I suppose, because I have been mostly an Absentee. Do not think, however, that you shall enjoy the fruits of your extortion? I will place the circumstances, and the proofs of the respective charges against you, in the hands of my solicitor, and, by the sacred heaven above me! you shall disgorge the fruits of your rapacity. My good people, I shall remain among you for another fortnight, during which time I intend to go through my estate, and set everything to rights as well as I can, until I may appoint a humane and feeling *gentleman* as my agent—such a one as will have, at least, a *character* to lose. I also take this opportunity of informing you, that in future I shall visit you often, will redress your grievances, should you have any to complain of, and will give such assistance to the honest and industrious among you—but to *them only*—as I trust may make us better pleased with each other than we have been.—Do not you go, M'Evoy, until I speak to you."

During these observations Carson sat with a smile, or rather a sneer upon his lips. It was the sneer of a purse-proud villain, confident that his wealth, no matter how ill-gotten, was still wealth, and worth its value.

"Colonel," said he, "I have heard all you said, but you see me 'so strong in honesty,' that I am not moved. In the course of a few weeks I shall have purchased an estate of my own, *which I will manage differently*, for my fortune is made, Sir. I intend also to give up my other agencies: I am rather old, and must retire to enjoy a little of the *otium cum dignitate*. I wish you all good morning!"

The Colonel turned away in abhorrence, but disdained any reply.

"A say, Sam," said the Presbyterian, "bring your son-in-laa wuth you."

"An' A say that too," exclaimed the drunken ruffian—"A say that; A do. A 'm married to his daughther; an' A say stull, that d—— my blood, bit A 'll stick to my father-in-laa! That 's the point!"—and again he nodded his head, and looked round him with a drunken swagger: —"A 'll stick to my father-in-laa! A 'll do that; feth, A wull!"*

It is scarcely necessary to inform the reader, that the Colonel's address to Carson soon got among the assembled tenantry, and a vehement volley of groans and hisses followed the discarded agent up the street.

"Ha! bad luck to you for an ould villain! You were made to hear on the deaf side o' your head at last! You may take the black wool out o' your ears now, you rip! The cries an' curses o' the widows an' orphans that you made and oppressed, has ris up agin you at the long run! Ha! you beggarly nager! maybe you 'll make us neglect our own work to do yours agin! Go an' gather the dhry cow-cakes, you misert, an' bring them home in your pocket, to throw on the dunghill!"

"Do you remimber the day," said others, "you met Mr. M. an' you goin' up the street wid a cake of it in your fists, undher your shabby skirts; an' whin the gintleman wint to shake hands wid you, how he discovered your maneness? Three groans for Yallow Sam, the extortioner! A short coorse to him! Your corner's warm for you, you villain!"

"But now, boys, for the Colonel!" they exclaimed.—"Huzza for noble Colonel B——, the rale Irish gintleman, that wouldn't see his tenants put upon by a villain!—Huzza! Hell resave yees, shout! Huzza! Huzza! Huzza! Huz—tundher-an'-ounze, my voice is cracked! Where 's his coach?—where 's his honour's coach? Come, boys, out wid it!—out wid it! Tattheration to yees, come! We 'll dhraw it to the divil, to hell, an' back agin, if it plases him! Success to Colonel B——! Blood-an-turf! what 'll we do for a fight? Long life to noble Colonel B——, the poor man's friend!—long life to him for ever an' a day longer! Whoo! my darlins! Huzza!" &c.

The warm interest which the Colonel took in M'Evoy's behalf, was looked upon by the other tenants as a guarantee of his sincerity in all he promised. Their enthusiasm knew no bounds. They got out his carriage from the Inn-yard, and drew it through the town, though the

* This dialect is local.

Colonel himself, beyond the fact of their shouting, remained quite ignorant of what was going forward.

After Carson's departure, the Colonel's friends, having been first asked to dine with him at the inn, also took their leave, and none remained but M'Evoy, who waited with pleasing anxiety to hear what the Colonel proposed to say—for he felt certain that it would be agreeable.

"M'Evoy," said the Colonel, "I am truly sorry for what you have suffered through the villany of my agent; but I will give you redress, and allow you for what you have lost by the transaction. It is true, as I have been lately told by a person who pleaded your cause nobly and eloquently, that I can never repay you for what you have suffered. However, what we can, we will do. You are poor, I understand?"

"God he sees that, Sir; and afflicted, too, plase your honour."

"Afflicted? How is that?"

"I had a son, Sir—a blessed boy! a darlin' boy!—once our comfort, an' once we thought he 'd be our pride an' our staff. but"—

The poor man's tears here flowed fast; he took up the skirt of his "Cotha More," or great-coat, and, after wiping his eyes, and clearing his voice, proceeded:—

"He was always, as I said, a blessed boy, and we looked up to him always, Sir. He saw our poverty, your honour, an' he felt it, Sir, keen enough, indeed, God help him! How-an'-iver, he took it on him to go up to Munster, Sir, undher hopes of risin' us—undher the hopes, poor child—an' God knows, Sir,—if—oh, Jemmy avourneen machree!—I doubt—I doubt you sunk undher what proved too many for you!—I doubt my child 's dead, Sir—him that all our hearts wor fixed upon; and if that 'ud happen to be the case, nothin'—not even your kindness in doin' us justice, could make us happy. We would rather beg wid him, Sir, nor have the best in the world widout him. His poor young heart, Sir, was fixed upon the place your honour is restorin' us to; an' I 'm afeard his mother, Sir, would break her heart if she thought he couldn't share our good fortune! And we don't know whether he 's livin' or dead! That, Sir, is what 's afflictin' us. I had some notion of goin' to look for him; but he tould us he would never write, or let us hear from him, till he 'd be either one thing or other."

"I can tell you, for your satisfaction, that your son is well, M'Evoy. Believe me, he is well—I know it."

"Well! Before God, does your honour spake truth? Well! Oh, Sir, for His sake that died for us, an' for the sake of his blessed mother, can you tell me is my darlin' son alive?"

"He is living; is in excellent health; is as well dressed as I am; and has friends as rich and as capable of assisting him as myself. But how is this? What 's the matter with you? You are pale! Good God! Here, waiter! Waiter! Waiter, I say!"

The Colonel rang the bell violently, and two or three waiters entered at the same moment.

"Bring a little wine and water, one of you, and let the other two remove this man to the open window. Be quick. What do you stare at?"

In a few minutes the old man recovered, and untying the narrow coarse cravat which he wore, wiped the perspiration off his pale face.

"Pray, don't be too much affected," said the Colonel. "Waiter, bring up refreshment—bring wine—be quiet and calm—you are weak, poor fellow—but we will strengthen you by-and-by."

"I am wake, Sir," he replied; "for, God help us! this was a hard year upon us; and we suffered what few could bear. But he 's livin' Colonel. Our darlin' is livin'! Oh, Colonel, your kindness went to my heart this day afore, but that was nothin'—he 's livin' an' well! On my two knees, before God, I thank you for them words! I thank you a thousand an' a thousand times more for them words, nor for what your honour did about Yallow Sam."

"Get up," said the Colonel—"get up. The proceedings of the day have produced a revulsion of feeling which has rendered you incapable of sustaining intelligence of your son. He is well, I assure you. Bring those things to this table, waiter."

"But can your honour tell me anything in particular about him, Sir? What he 's doin'—or what he intends to do?"

"Yes! he is at a respectable boarding-school."

"Boordin'-school! But isn't boordin'-schools Protestants, Sir?'"

"Not at all; he is at a Catholic boarding-school, and reading hard to be a priest, which, I hope, he will soon be. He has good friends, and you may thank *him* for being restored to your farm."

"Glory be to my Maker for that! Oh, Sir, your tenants wor desaved in you! They thought, Sir, that you wor a hard-hearted gintleman, that didn't care whether they lived or died."

"I feel that I neglected them too long, M'Evoy. Now take some refreshment: eat something, and afterwards drink a few glasses of wine. Your feelings have been much excited, and you will be the better for it. Keep up your spirits. I am going to ride, and must leave you: but if you call on me to-morrow, at one o'clock, I shall have more good news for you. We must stock your farm, and enable you to enter upon it creditably."

"Sir," said M'Evoy, "you are a Protestant; but, as I hope to enther glory, I an' my wife an' childhre will pray that your bed may be made in heaven, this night; and that your honour may be led to see the thruth an' the right coorse."

The Colonel then left him; and the simple man, on looking at the cold meat, bread, and wine before him, raised his hands and eyes towards heaven, to thank God for his goodness, and to invoke a blessing upon his noble and munificent benefactor.

But how shall we describe the feelings of his family, when, after returning home, he related the occurrences of that day. The severe and pressing exigences under which they laboured had prevented his sons from attending the investigation that was to take place in town. Their expectations, however, were raised, and they looked out with intense anxiety for the return of their father.

At length, he was seen coming slowly up the hill; the spades were thrown aside, and the whole family assembled to hear "what was done."

The father entered in silence, sat down, and after wiping his brow, and laying down his hat, placing his staff across it upon the floor, he drew his breath deeply.

"Dominick," said the wife, "what news? What was done?"

"Vara," replied Dominick, "do you remimber the day—fair and handsome you wor then—when I first kissed your lips, as my own darlin' wife?"

"Ah, avourneen, Dominick, don't spake of them times. The happiness we had then is long gone, acushla, in one sense."

"It's before me like yestherday, Vara,—the delight that went through my heart, jist as clear as yestherday, or the blessed sun that's shinin' through the broken windy on the floor there. I remimber, Vara, saying to you that day—I don't know whether *you* remimber it or not—but *I* remimber sayin' to you, that if I lived a thousand years, I could never feel sich happiness as I did when I first pressed you to my heart as my own wife."

"Well, but we want to hear what happened, Dominick, achora."

"Do you remimber the words, Vara?"

"Och! I do, avourneen. *Didn't they go into my heart at the time*, an' *how* could I *forget* them? But I can't bear, somehow, to look back at what we wor then, bekase I feel my heart brakin', acushla!"

"Well, Vara, look at me. Amn't I a poor wasted crathur now, in comparishment to what I was thin?"

"God he sees the change that's in you, darlin'! But sure 'twasn't your fau't, or mine either, Dominick, avillish!"

"Well, Vara, you see me now—I'm happier—before God, I'm happier—happier, a thousand degrees, than I was thin! Come to my arms, asthore machree—my heart's breakin'—but it's wid happiness—don't be frightened—it's wid joy I'm sheddin' these tears—it's wid happiness an' delight I'm cryin! Jemmy is livin', an' well, childhre—he's livin' an' well, Vara—the star of our hearts is livin', an' well, an' happy! Kneel down, childhre—kneel down! Bend before the great God, an' thank him for his kindness to your blessed brother—to our blessed son. Bless the Colonel, childhre; bless him whin you're down, Protestant an' all, as he is. Oh, bless him as if you prayed for myself, or for Jemmy, that's far away from us!"

He paused for a few minutes, bent his head upon his hands as he knelt in supplication at the chair, then resumed his seat, as did the whole family, deeply affected.

"Now, childhre," said he, "I'll tell yez all; but don't any of you be so poor a crathur as I was to-day. Bear it mild an' asy, Vara, acushla, for I know it will take a start out of you. Sure we're to go back to our own ould farm! Ay, an' what's more—oh, God of heaven, bless him!—what's more, the Colonel is to stock it for us, an' to help us; an' what is more, Yallow Sam is *out!* OUT!!"

"Out!" they exclaimed: "Jemmy well, an' Yallow Sam out! Oh, father, surely"——

"Now behave, I say. Ay, and never to come in again! But who do you think got him out?"

"Who?—why God he knows. Who *could* get him out?"

"Our son, Vara—our son, childhre: Jemmy got him out, an' got ourselves back to our farm! I had it partly from the noble Colonel's own lips, an' the remainder from Mr. Moutray, that I met on my way home. But there 's more to come:—sure Jemmy has friends aquil to the Colonel himself: an' sure he 's at a Catholic boordin'-school, among gintlemen's childhre, an' in a short time he 'll be a priest in full ordhers."

We here draw a veil over the delight of the family. Questions upon questions, replies upon replies, sifting and cross-examinations, followed in rapid succession, until all was known that the worthy man had to communicate.

Another simple scene followed, which, as an Irishman, I write with sorrow. When the joy of the family had somewhat subsided, the father, putting his hand in his coat-pocket, pulled out several large slices of mutton.

"Along wid all, childhre," said he, "the Colonel ordhered me my dinner. I ate plinty myself, an' slipped these slices in my pocket for you: but the devil a one o' me knows what kind o' mate it is. An' I got wine, too! Oh!—Well, they may talk, but wine *is* the dhrink! Bring me the ould knife, till I make a fair divide of it among ye. Musha, what kind o' mate can it be, for myself doesn't remimber atin' any sort, barrin' bacon, an' a bit o' slink-veal of an odd time?"

They all ate it with an experimental air of sagacity that was rather amusing. None, however, had ever tasted mutton before, and consequently the name of the meat remained, on that occasion, a profound secret to M'Evoy and his family.* It is true, they *supposed* it to be mutton; but not one of them could pronounce it to be such, from any positive knowledge of its peculiar flavour.

"Well," said Dominick, "it 's no matther what the name of it is, in regard that it 's good mate, any way, for them that has enough of it."

With a fervent heart and streaming eyes did this virtuous family offer up their grateful prayers to that God whose laws they had not knowingly violated, and to whose providence they owed so much. Nor was their benefactor forgotten. The strength and energy of the Irish language, being that in which the peasantry usually pray, were well adapted to express the depth of their gratitude towards a man who had, as they said, "humbled himself to look into their wants, as if he was like one of themselves!"

For upwards of ten years they had not gone to bed free from the heaviness of care, or the wasting grasp of poverty. Now their hearth was once more surrounded by peace and contentment; their burthens were removed, their pulses beat freely, and the language of happiness again was heard under their humble roof. Even sleep could not repress the vivacity of their enjoyments: they dreamt of their brother—for in the Irish heart the domestic affections hold the first place;—they dreamt of the farm to which those affections had so long yearned. They trod it again as its legitimate possessors. Its fields were brighter, its corn

* There are hundreds of thousands—yes, millions—of the poorer classes in Ireland, who have never tasted mutton!

waved with softer murmurs to the breeze, its harvests were richer, and the song of their harvest home more cheerful than before. Their delight was tumultuous, but intense; and when they arose in the morning to

A sober certainty of waking bliss,

they again knelt in worship to God with exulting hearts, and again offered up their sincere prayers in behalf of the just man who had asserted their rights against the oppressor.

Colonel B. was a man who, without having been aware of it, possessed an excellent capacity for business. The neglect of his property resulted not from want of feeling, but merely from want of consideration. There had moreover been no precedent for him to follow. He had seen no Irishman of rank ever bestow a moment's attention on his tenantry. They had been, for the most part, absentees like himself, and felt satisfied if they succeeded in receiving their half-yearly remittance in due course, without ever reflecting for a moment upon the situation of those from whom it was drawn.

Nay, what was more—he had not seen even the *resident* gentry enter into the state and circumstances of those who lived upon their property. It was a mere accident that determined him to become acquainted with his tenants; but no sooner had he seen his duty, and come to the resolution of performing it, than the decision of his character became apparent. It is true, that, within the last few years, the Irish landlords have advanced in knowledge. Many of them have introduced more improved systems of agriculture, and instructed their tenants in the best methods of applying them; but during the time of which we write, an Irish landlord only saw his tenants when canvassing them for their votes, and instructing them in dishonesty and perjury, not reflecting that he was then teaching them to practise the arts of dissimulation and fraud against himself. This was the late system: let us hope that it will be superseded by a better one; and that a landlord will think it a duty, but neither a trouble nor a condescension, to look into his own affairs, and keep an eye upon the morals and habits of his tenantry.

The Colonel, as he had said, remained more than a fortnight upon his estate; and, as he often declared since, the recollections arising from the good which he performed during that brief period, rendered it the portion of his past life upon which he could look with most satisfaction. He did not leave the country till he saw M'Evoy and his family restored to their farm, and once more independent;—until he had redressed every well-founded complaint, secured the affections of those who had before detested him, and diffused peace and comfort amongst every family upon his estate. From thenceforth he watched the interests of his tenants, and soon found that in promoting their welfare, and instructing them in their duties, he was more his own benefactor than theirs. Before many years had elapsed, his property was wonderfully improved; he himself was called the "Lucky Landlord," "bekase," said the people, "ever since he spoke to, an' advised his tenants, we find that it 's *lucky* to live undher him. The people has heart to work wid a gintleman that won't grind thim; an' so sign's on it, every one thrives upon his land; an' dang my bones, but I believe a rotten stick 'ud grow on it, set in case it was thried."

In sooth, his popularity became proverbial; but it is probable, that not even his justice and humanity contributed so much to this, as the vigour with which he prosecuted his suit against "Yallow Sam," whom he compelled literally to "disgorge" the fruits of his heartless extortion. This worthy agent died soon after his disgrace, without any legitimate issue; and his property, which amounted to about fifty thousand pounds, is now inherited by a gentleman of the strictest honour and integrity. To this day his memory is detested by the people, who, with that bitterness by which they stigmatise a villain, have erected him into a standard of dishonesty. If a man become remarkable for want of principle, they usually say—"he's as great a rogue as Yallow Sam;" or, "he is the greatest sconce that ever was in the country, *barrin'* Yallow Sam."

We now dismiss him, and request our readers, at the same time, not to suppose that we have held him up as a portrait of Irish agents in general. On the contrary, we believe that they constitute a most respectable class of men, who have certainly very difficult duties to perform. The Irish landlords, we are happy to say, taught by experience, have, for the most part, both seen and felt the necessity of appointing gentlemen of property to situations so very important, and which require so much patience, consideration, and humanity, in those who fill them. We trust they will persevere in this plan; * but we can assure them, that all the virtues of the best agent can never compensate, in the opinion of the people, for neglect in the "Head Landlord." One visit or act, even of nominal kindness, from *him*, will at any time produce more attachment and gratitude among them, than a whole life spent in good offices by an agent. Like Sterne's French Beggar, they would prefer a pinch of snuff from the one, to a guinea from the other. The agent only renders them a favour, but the Head Landlord does them an honour.

Colonel B., immediately after his return home, sent for Mr. O'Brien, who waited on him with a greater degree of curiosity than perhaps he had ever felt before. The Colonel smiled as he extended his hand to him.

"Mr. O'Brien," said he, "I knew you would feel anxious to hear the result of my visit to the estate which this man with the nickname managed for me."

"*Managed*, Sir? Did you say manag*ed*?"

"I spoke in the past time, O'Brien: he is out."

"Then your *protégé's* story was correct, Sir?"

"True to a tittle. O'Brien, there is something extraordinary in that boy; otherwise, how could it happen that a sickly, miserable-looking creature, absolutely in tatters, could have impressed us both so strongly with a sense of the injustice done ten years ago to his father? It is, indeed, remarkable."

"The boy, Colonel, deeply felt that act of injustice, and the expression of it came home to the heart."

"I have restored his father, however. The poor man and his family are once more happy. I have stocked their old farm for them; in fact, they now enjoy comfort and independence."

* This tale has been written nearly twelve years, but the author deeply regrets that the Irish landlords have disentitled themselves to the favourable notice taken of them in the text.

"I am glad, Sir, that you have done them justice. That act, alone, will go far to redeem your character from the odium which the conduct of your agent was calculated to throw upon it."

"There is not probably in Ireland a landlord so popular as I am this moment—at least among my tenants on *that* property. Restoring M'Evoy, however, is but a small part of what I have done. Carson's pranks were incredible. He was a rack-renter of the first water. A person named Brady had paid him twenty-five guineas as a *douceur*—in other words, as a bribe—for renewing a lease for him; yet, after having received the money, he kept the poor man dangling after him, and at length told him that he was offered a larger sum by another. In some cases he kept back the receipts, and made the poor people pay twice, which was still more iniquitous. Then, Sir, he would not take bank notes in payment. No; he was so wonderfully conscientious, and so zealously punctual, in fulfilling *my wishes*, as he told them on the subject, that nothing would pass in payment but gold. This gold, Sir, they were compelled to receive from himself, at a most oppressive premium; so that he actually fleeced them under my name, in every conceivable manner and form of villany. He is a usurer, too; and, I am told, worth forty or fifty thousand pounds: but, thank heaven! he is no longer an agent of mine."

"It gives me sincere pleasure, Sir, that you have at length got correct habits of thinking upon your duties as an Irish landlord; for believe me, Colonel B., as a subject involving a great portion of national happiness or national misery, it is entitled to the deepest and most serious consideration, not only of the class to which you belong, but of the legislature. Something should be done, Sir, to improve the condition of the poorer classes. A rich country and poor inhabitants is an anomaly; and whatever is done should be prompt and effectual. If the Irish landlords looked directly into the state of their tenantry, and set themselves vigorously to the task of bettering their circumstances, they would, I am certain, establish the tranquillity and happiness of the country at large. The great secret, Colonel, of the dissensions that prevail among us is the poverty of the people. They are poor, and therefore the more easily wrought up to outrage; they are poor, and think that *any* change must be for the better; they are not only poor, but imaginative, and the fittest recipients for those vague speculations by which they are deluded. Let their condition be improved, and the most fertile source of popular tumult and crime is closed. Let them be taught *how* to labour: let them not be bowed to the earth by rents so far above the real value of their lands. The pernicious maxims which float among them must be refuted—not by theory, but by practical lessons performed before their eyes for their own advantage. Let them be taught how to discriminate between their real interests and their prejudices; and none can teach them all this so effectually as their landlords, if they could be roused from their apathy, and induced to undertake the task. Who ever saw a poor nation without great crimes?"

"Very true, O'Brien; quite true. I am resolved to inspect personally the condition of those who reside on my other estates. But now about our *protégé*? How is he doing?"

"Extremely well. I have had a letter from him a few days ago, in which he alludes to the interest you have taken in himself and his family, with a depth of feeling truly affecting."

"When you write to him, let him know that I have placed his father in his old farm; and that Carson is out. Say I am sure he will conduct himself properly, in which case I charge myself with his expenses until he shall have accomplished his purpose. After that he may work his own way through life, and I have no doubt but he will do it well and honourably."

Colonel B——'s pledge on this occasion was nobly redeemed. Our humble hero pursued his studies with zeal and success. In due time he entered Maynooth, where he distinguished himself not simply for smartness as a student, but as a young man possessed of a mind far above the common order. During all this time nothing occurred worthy of particular remark, except that, in fulfilment of his former vow, he never wrote to any of his friends; for the reader should have been told, that this was originally comprehended in the determination he had formed. He received ordination at the hands of his friend the Bishop, whom we have already introduced to the reader, and on the same day he was appointed by that gentleman to a curacy in his own parish. The Colonel, whose regard for him never cooled, presented him with fifty pounds, together with a horse, saddle, and bridle; so that he found himself in a capacity to enter upon his duties in a decent and becoming manner. Another circumstance that added considerably to his satisfaction, was the appointment of Mr. O'Brien to a parish adjoining that of the Bishop. James's afflictions had been the means of bringing the merits of that excellent man before his spiritual superior, who became much attached to him, and availed himself of the earliest opportunity of rewarding his unobtrusive piety and benevolence.

No sooner was his ordination completed, than the long suppressed yearnings after his home and kindred came upon his spirit with a power that could not be restrained. He took leave of his friends with a beating heart, and set out on a delightful summer morning to revisit all that had been, notwithstanding his long absence and severe trials, so strongly wrought into his memory and affections. Our readers may, therefore, suppose him on his journey home, and permit themselves to be led in imagination to the house of his former friend, Lanigan, where we must lay the scene for the present.

Lanigan's residence has the same comfortable and warm appearance which always distinguishes the habitation of the independent and virtuous man. What, however, can the stir, and bustle, and agitation which prevail in it mean? The daughters run out to a little mound, or natural terrace, beside the house, and look anxiously towards the road; then return, and almost immediately appear again, with the same intense anxiety to catch a glimpse of some one whom they expect. They look keenly; but why is it that their disappointment appears to be attended with such dismay? They go into their father's house once more, wringing their hands, and betraying all the symptoms of affliction. Here is their mother, too, coming to peer into the distance, she is rocking with that motion peculiar to Irishwomen when suffering distress. She places

her open hand upon her brows that she may collect her sight to a particular spot; she is blinded by her tears; breaks out into a low wail, and returns with something like the darkness of despair on her countenance. She goes into the house, passes through the kitchen, and enters into a bed-room; seats herself on a chair beside the bed, and renews her low but bitter wail of sorrow. Her husband is lying in that state which the peasantry know usually precedes the agonies of death.

"For the sake of the livin' God," said he, on seeing her, "is there any sign o' them?"

"Not yet, *a suillish;* * but they will soon—they must soon, asthore, be here, an' thin your mind will be asy."

"Oh, Alley, Alley, if you could know what I suffer for 'fraid I 'd die widout the priest, you 'd pity me!"

"I do pity you, asthore: but don't be cast down, for I have my trust in God that he won't desart you in your last hour. You did what you could, my heart's pride; you bent before him night an' mornin', and sure the poor neighbour never wint from your door widout lavin' his blessin' behind him."

The dying man raised his hands feebly from the bed-clothes; "Ah!" he exclaimed, "I thought I did a great dale, Alley: but now—but now—it appears nothin' to what I ought to a' done when I could. Still, avourneen, my life's not unpleasant when I look back at it; for I can't remimber that I ever purposely offinded a livin' mortal. All I want to satisfy me is the priest."

"No, avourneen, you did not; for it wasn't in you to offind a child."

"Alley, you'll pardon me an' forgive me acushla, if ever—if ever I did what was displasin' to you! An' call in the childhre, till I see them about me—I want to have their forgiveness, too. I know I'll have it—for they wor good childhre, an' ever loved me."

The daughters now entered the room, exclaiming—"*Ahir dheelish*, (beloved father,) Pether is comin' by himself, but no priest! Blessed Queen of Heaven, what will we do! Oh! father darlin', are you to die widout the Holy Ointment?"

The sick man clasped his hands, looked towards heaven, and groaned aloud.

"Oh, it 's hard, this," said he. "It 's hard upon me! Yet I won't be cast down. I'll trust in my good God; I'll trust in his blessed name!"

His wife on hearing that her son was returned without the priest, sat, with her face shrouded by her apron, weeping in grief that none but they who know the dependence which those belonging to her church place in its last rites can comprehend. The children appeared almost distracted; their grief had more of that stunning character which attends unexpected calamity, than of sorrow for one who is gradually drawn from life.

At length the messenger entered the room, and almost choked with tears, stated that both priests were absent that day at Conference, and would not return till late.

The hitherto moderated grief of the wife arose to a pitch much wilder than the death of her husband could, under ordinary circumstances, occasion. To die without absolution—to pass away into eternity "un-

* My light.

anointed, unanealed"—without being purified from the inherent stains of humanity—was to her a much deeper affliction than her final separation from him. She cried in tones of the most piercing despair, and clapped her hands, as they do who weep over the dead. Had he died in the calm confidence of having received the *Viaticum*, or Sacrament before death, his decease would have had nothing remarkably calamitous in it, beyond usual occurrences of a similar nature. Now the grief was intensely bitter in consequence of his expected departure without the priest. His sons and daughters felt it as forcibly as his wife; their lamentations were full of the strongest and sharpest agony.

For nearly three hours did they remain in this situation; poor Lanigan sinking by degrees into that collapsed state from which there is no possibility of rallying. He was merely able to speak, and recognise his family; but every moment advanced him, with awful certainty, nearer and nearer to his end.

A great number of the neighbours were now assembled, all participating in the awful feeling which predominated, and anxious to compensate by their prayers for the absence of that confidence derived by Roman Catholics during the approach of death, from the spiritual aid of the priest. They were all at prayer; the sick room and kitchen were crowded with his friends and acquaintances, many of whom knelt out before the door, and joined with loud voices in the Rosary which was offered up in his behalf.

In this crisis were they, when a horseman, dressed in black, approached the house. Every head was instantly turned round, with a hope that it might be the parish priest or his curate; but, alas! they were doomed to experience a fresh disappointment. The stranger, though clerical enough in his appearance, presented a countenance with which none of them was acquainted. On glancing at the group who knelt around the door, he appeared to understand the melancholy cause which brought them together.

"How is this?" he exclaimed. "Is there any one here sick or dying?"

"Poor Misther Lanigan, Sir, is jist departin', glory be to God! An' what is terrible all out upon himself and family, he 's dyin' widout the priest. They 're both at Conwhirence, Sir, and can't come—Mr. Dogherty an' his curate."

"Make way!" said the stranger, throwing himself off his horse, and passing quickly through the people. "Show me to the sick man's room—be quick, my friends—I am a Catholic clergyman."

In a moment a passage was cleared, and the stranger found himself beside the bed of death. Grief in the room was loud and bitter; but his presence stilled it despite of what they felt.

"My dear friends," said he, "you know there should be silence in the apartment of a dying man. For shame!—for shame! Cease this clamour, it will but distract him for whom you weep, and prevent him from composing his mind for the great trial that is before him."

"Sir," said Lanigan's wife, seizing his hand in both hers, and looking distractedly in his face, "are you a priest? For heaven's sake tell us!"

"I am," he replied; "leave the room every one of you. I hope your husband is not speechless?"

"Sweet Queen of Heaven, not yet, may her name be praised! but near it, your Reverence—widin little or no time of it."

Whilst they spoke, he was engaged in putting the stole about his neck, after which he cleared the room, and commenced hearing Lanigan's confession.

The appearance of a priest, and the consolation it produced, rallied the powers of life in the benevolent farmer. He became more collected; made a clear and satisfactory confession; received the sacrament of Extreme Unction; and felt himself able to speak with tolerable distinctness and precision. The effects of all this were astonishing. A placid serenity, full of hope and confidence, beamed from the pale and worn features of him who was but a few minutes before in a state of terror altogether indescribable. When his wife and family, after having been called in, observed this change, they immediately participated in his tranquillity. Death had been deprived of its sting, and grief of its bitterness; their sorrow was still deep, but it was not darkened by the dread of future misery. They felt for him as a beloved father, a kind husband, and a dear friend, who had lived a virtuous life, feared God, and was now about to pass into happiness.

When the rites of the church were administered, and the family again assembled round the bed, the priest sat down in a position which enabled him to see the features of this good man more distinctly.

"I would be glad," said Lanigan, "to know who it is that God in his goodness has sent to smooth my bed in death, if it 'ud be plasin', Sir, to you to tell me?"

"Do you remember," replied the priest, "a young lad whom you met some years ago on his way to Munster, as a poor scholar? You and your family were particularly kind to him; so kind that he has never since forgotten your affectionate hospitality."

"We do, your Reverence, we do. A mild, gentle crathur he was, poor boy. I hope God prospered him."

"You see him now before you," said the priest. "I am that boy, and I thank God that I can testify, however slightly, my deep sense of the virtues which you exercised towards me; although I regret that the occasion is one of such affliction."

The farmer raised his eyes and feeble hands towards heaven. "Praise an' glory to your name, good God!" he exclaimed. "Praise an' glory to your holy name! Now I know that I'm not forgotten, when you brought back the little kindness I did that boy for *your sake,* wid so many blessins to me in the hour of my affliction an' sufferin'! Childher remimber this, now that I'm goin' to lave yez for ever! Remimber always to help the stranger, an' thim that 's poor an' in sorrow. If you do, God won't forget it to you; but will bring it back to yez when you stand in need of it, as he done to me this day. You see, childhre dear, how small thrifles o' that kind depend on one another. If I hadn't thought of helpin' his Reverence here when he was young and away from his own, he wouldn't think of callin' upon us this day as he was passin'. You see the hand of God is in it, childhre: which it is, indeed, in every thing that passes about us, if we could only see it as we ought to do. Thin, but I'd like to look upon your face, Sir, if it 's

plasin' to you? A little more to the light, Sir. There, I now see you. Ay, indeed, it 's changed for the betther it is—the same mild, clear countenance, but not sorrowful, as when I seen it last. Suffer me to put my hand on your head, Sir; I 'd like to bless you before I die, for I can't forget what you undhertook to do for your parents."

The priest sat near him; but finding that he was scarcely able to raise his hand to his head, he knelt down, and the farmer, before he communicated the blessing, inquired—

"Musha, Sir, may I ax, wor you able to do anything to help your family as you expected?"

"God," said the priest, "made me the instrument of raising them from their poverty; they are now comfortable and happy."

"Ay! Well I knew at the time, an' I said it, that a blessin' would attind your endayvours. An' now resave *my* blessin'. May you never depart from the right way! May the blessin' of God rest upon you for ever—Amin! Childhre, I 'm gettin' wake; come near me, till, till I bless you, too, for the last time! They wor good childhre, Sir—they were ever an' always good to me, an' to their poor mother, your Reverence; an'—God forgive me if it 's a sin!—but I feel a great dale o' my heart an' my love fixed upon them. But sure, I 'm their father, an' God, I hope, will look over it! Now, darlins, afore I bless yez, I ax your forgiveness if ever I was harsher to yez than I ought!"

The children with a simultaneous movement encircled his bed, and could not reply for some minutes.

"Never, father darlin'! Oh, never did you offind us! Don't speak in that way, or you 'll break our hearts; but forgive *us*, father asthore! Oh, forgive an' bless us, an' don't remimber against us, our folly an' disobedience, for it 's only now that we see we warn't towards you as we ought to be. Forgive us an' pardon us!"

He then made them all kneel around his bed, and with solemn words, and an impressive manner, placed his hand upon their heads, and blessed them with a virtuous father's last blessing.

He then called for his wife, and the scene became not only more touching, but more elevated. There was an exultation in her manner, and an expression of vivid hope in her eye, arising from the fact of her husband having received, and been soothed by, the rites of her church, that gave evident proof of the unparalleled attachment borne by persons of her class to the Catholic religion. The arrival of our hero had been so unexpected, and the terrors of the tender wife for her husband's soul so great, that the administration of the sacrament almost superseded from her heart every other sensation than that of devotional triumph. Even now, in the midst of her tears, that triumph kindled in her eye, with a light that shone in melancholy beauty upon the bed of death. In proportion, however, as the parting scene—which was to be their *last*—began to work with greater power upon her sorrow, so did this expression gradually fade away. Grief for his loss resumed its dominion over her heart so strongly, that their last parting was afflicting even to look upon.

When it was over, Lanigan once more addressed the priest:—

"Now, Sir," he observed, but with great difficulty, "let me have *your*

blessin' an' your prayers; an' along wid that, your Reverence, if you remimber a request I once made to you"—

"I remember it well," replied the priest; "you allude to the masses which you wished me to say for you, should I ever receive Orders. Make your mind easy on that point. I not only *shall* offer up mass for the repose of your soul, but I can assure you that I *have* mentioned you *by name* in every mass which I celebrated since my ordination."

He then proceeded to direct the mind of his dying benefactor to such subjects as were best calculated to comfort and strengthen him.

About day-break the next morning, this man of many virtues, after struggling rather severely for two hours preceding his death, passed into eternity, there to enjoy the recompense of a well-spent life.

When he was dead, the priest, who never left him during the night, approached the bed, and after surveying his benevolent features, now composed in the stillness of death, exclaimed—

"Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord, for they rest from their labours, and their works do follow them!"

Having uttered the words aloud, he sat down beside the bed, buried his face in his handkerchief, and wept.

He was now only a short day's journey from home, and as his presence, he knew, would be rather a restraint upon a family so much in affliction, he bade them farewell, and proceeded on his way. He travelled slowly, and, as every well-known hill or lake appeared to him, his heart beat quickly, his memory gave up its early stores, and his affections prepared themselves for the trial that was before them.

"It is better for me not to arrive," thought he, "until the family shall have returned from their daily labour, and are collected about the hearth."

In the meantime, many an impression of profound and fervid piety came over him, when he reflected upon the incontrovertible proofs of providential protection and interference which had been, during his absence from home, under his struggles, and, in his good fortune, so clearly laid before him. "Deep," he exclaimed, "is the gratitude I owe to God for this; may I never forget to acknowledge it!"

It was now about seven o'clock; the evening was calm, and the sun shone with that clear amber light which gives warmth, and the power of exciting tenderness to natural scenery. He had already gained the ascent which commanded a view of the rich sweep of country that reposed below. There it lay—his native home—his native parish—bathed in the light and glory of the hour. Its fields were green—its rivers shining like loosened silver, its meadows already studded with hay-cocks, its green pastures covered with sheep, and its unruffled lakes reflecting the hills under which they lay. Here and there a gentleman's residence rose among the distant trees, and well did he recognise the church spire that cut into the western sky on his right. It is true, nothing of the grandeur and magnificence of nature was there; everything was simple in its beauty. The quiet charm, the serene light, the air of happiness and peace that reposed upon all he saw, stirred up a thousand tender feelings in a heart whose gentle character resembled that of the prospect which it felt so exquisitely. The smoke of a few farm-houses and cottages rose in blue

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graceful columns to the air, giving just that appearance of life which was necessary; and a figure or two, with lengthened shadows, moved across the fields and meadows a little below where he stood.

But our readers need not to be told, that there was *one* spot which, beyond all others, rivetted his attention. On that spot his eager eye rested long and intensely. The spell of its remembrance had clung to his early heart: he had never seen it in his dreams without weeping; and often had the agitation of his imaginary sorrow awoke him with his eyelashes steeped in tears. He looked down on it steadily. At length he was moved with a strong sensation like grief: he sobbed twice or thrice, and the tears rolled in showers from his eyes. His gathering affections were relieved by this: he felt lighter, and in the same slow manner rode onward to his father's house.

To this there were two modes of access: one by a paved bridle-way, or *boreen*, that ran up directly before the door—the other by a green lane, that diverged from the *boreen* about a furlong below the house. He took the latter, certain that the family could not notice his approach, nor hear the noise of his horse's footsteps, until he could arrive at the very threshold. On dismounting, he felt that he could scarcely walk. He approached the door, however, as steadily as he could. He entered—and the family, who had just finished their supper, rose up, as a mark of their respect to the stranger.

"Is this," he inquired, "the house in which Dominick M'Evoy lives?"

"That 's my name, Sir," replied Dominick.

"The family, I trust, are—all—well? I have been desired——but no—no—I cannot—I cannot—FATHER!—MOTHER!"

"It 's *him!*" shrieked the mother—"It 's himself!—Jemmy!"

"Jemmy!—Jemmy!!" shouted the father, with a cry of joy which might be heard far beyond the house.

"Jemmy!—our poor Jemmy!—Jemmy!!" exclaimed his brothers and sisters.

"Asy, childhre," said the father—"asy; let the mother to him—let *her* to him. Who has the right that *she* has? Vara, asthore—Vara, think of yourself. God of heaven! what is comin' over her?—Her brain 's turned!"

"Father, don't remove her," said the son. "Leave her arms where they are: it 's long since they encircled my neck before. Often—often would I have given the wealth of the universe to be encircled in my blessed and beloved mother's arms! Yes, yes!—Weep, my father—weep, each of you. You see those tears;—consider them as a proof that I have never forgotten you! Beloved mother! recollect yourself: she knows me not—her eyes wander!—I fear the shock has been too much for her. Place a chair at the door, and I will bring her to the air."

After considerable effort, the mother's faculties were restored so far as to be merely conscious that our hero was her son. She had not yet shed a tear, but now she surveyed his countenance, smiled and named him, placed her hands upon him, and examined his dress with a singular blending of conflicting emotions, but still without being thoroughly collected.

"I will speak to her," said Jemmy, "in Irish, it will go directly to her heart:—*Mhair, avourneen, tha ma, laht, anish!*—Mother, my darling, I am with you at last."

"*Shamus, aroon, vick machree, wuil thu lhum? wuil thu—wuil thu lhum?*—Jemmy, my beloved, son of my heart, are you with me?—are you—are you with me?"

"*Ish maheen a tha in, a vair dheelish machree.*—It is *I* who am with you, beloved mother of my heart!"

She smiled again—but only for a moment. She looked at him, laid his head upon her bosom, bedewed his face with her tears, and muttered out, in a kind of sweet, musical cadence, the Irish cry of joy.

We are incapable of describing this scene further. Our readers must be contented to know, that the delight and happiness of our hero's whole family were complete. Their son, after many years of toil and struggle, had at length succeeded, by a virtuous course of action, in raising them from poverty to comfort, and in effecting his own object, which was, to become a member of the Catholic priesthood. During all his trials he never failed to rely on God; and it is seldom that those who rely upon Him, when striving to attain a laudable purpose, are ever ultimately disappointed.

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We regret to inform our readers, that the poor scholar is dead! He did not, in fact, long survive the accomplishment of his wishes. But as we had the particulars of his story from his nearest friends, we thought his virtues of too exalted a nature to pass into oblivion without some record, however humble. He died as he had lived—the friend of God and of man.

* * * *

I HAD read the anonymous summons, but from its general import, I believed it to be one of those special meetings convened for some purpose affecting the usual objects and proceedings of the body; at least the terms in which it was conveyed to me had nothing extraordinary or mysterious in them, beyond the simple fact, that it was not to be a general but a select meeting: this mark of confidence flattered me, and I determined to attend punctually. I was, it is true, desired to keep the circumstance entirely to myself, but there was nothing startling in this, for I had often received summonses of a similar nature. I therefore resolved to attend, according to the letter of my instructions, "on the next night, at the solemn hour of midnight, to deliberate and act upon such matters as should then and there be submitted to my consideration." The morning after I received this message, I arose and resumed my usual occupations; but, from whatever cause it may have proceeded, I felt a sense of approaching evil hang heavily upon me: the beats of my pulse were languid, and an undefinable feeling of anxiety pervaded my whole spirit; even my face was pale, and my eye so heavy, that my father and brothers concluded me to be ill; an opinion which I thought at the time to be correct, for I felt exactly that kind of depression which precedes a severe fever. I could not understand what I experienced, nor can I yet, except by supposing that there is in human nature some mysterious faculty, by

which, in coming calamities, the dread of some fearful evil is anticipated, and that it is possible to catch a dark presentiment of the sensations which they subsequently produce. For my part I can neither analyse nor define it; but on that day I knew it by painful experience, and so have a thousand others in similar circumstances.

It was about the middle of winter. The day was gloomy and tempestuous almost beyond any other I remember: dark clouds rolled over the hills about me, and a close sleet-like rain fell in slanting drifts that chased each other rapidly towards the earth on the course of the blast. The outlying cattle sought the closest and calmest corners of the fields for shelter; the trees and young groves were tossed about, for the wind was so unusually high that it swept in hollow gusts through them, with that hoarse murmur which deepens so powerfully on the mind the sense of dreariness and desolation.

As the shades of night fell, the storm, if possible, increased. The moon was half gone, and only a few stars were visible by glimpses, as a rush of wind left a temporary opening in the sky. I had determined, if the storm should not abate, to incur any penalty rather than attend the meeting; but the appointed hour was distant, and I resolved to be decided by the future state of the night.

Ten o'clock came, but still there was no change; eleven passed, and on opening the door to observe if there were any likelihood of its clearing up, a blast of wind, mingled with rain, nearly blew me off my feet. At length it was approaching to the hour of midnight; and on examining it a third time, I found it had calmed a little, and no longer rained.

I instantly got my oak stick, muffled myself in my great coat, strapped my hat about my ears, and, as the place of meeting was only a quarter of a mile distant, I presently set out.

The appearance of the heavens was lowering and angry, particularly in that point where the light of the moon fell against the clouds, from a seeming chasm in them, through which alone she was visible. The edges of this chasm were faintly bronzed, but the dense body of the masses that hung piled on each side of her, was black and impenetrable to sight. In no other point of the heavens was there any part of the sky visible; a deep veil of clouds overhung the whole horizon, yet was the light sufficient to give occasional glimpses of the rapid shifting which took place in this dark canopy, and of the tempestuous agitation with which the midnight storm swept to and fro beneath it.

At length I arrived at a long slated house, situated in a solitary part of the neighbourhood; a little below it ran a small stream, which was now swollen above its banks, and rushing with mimic roar over the flat meadows beside it. The appearance of the bare slated building in such a night was particularly sombre, and to those, like me, who knew the purpose to which it was usually devoted, it was or ought to have been peculiarly so. There it stood, silent and gloomy, without any appearance of human life or enjoyment about or within it. As I approached, the moon once more had broken out of the clouds, and shone dimly upon the wet, glittering slates and windows, with a death-like lustre, that gradually faded away as I left the point of observation, and entered the folding-door. It was the parish chapel.

The scene which presented itself here was in keeping not only with the external appearance of the house, but with the darkness, the storm, and the hour, which was now a little after midnight. About forty persons were sitting in dead silence upon the circular steps of the altar. They did not seem to move; and as I entered and advanced, the echo of my footsteps rang through the building with a lonely distinctness, which added to the solemnity and mystery of the circumstances about me. The windows were secured with shutters on the inside, and on the altar a candle was lighted, which burned dimly amid the surrounding darkness, and lengthened the shadow of the altar itself, and those of six or seven persons who *stood* on its upper steps, until they mingled in the obscurity which shrouded the lower end of the chapel. The faces of the men who *sat* on the altar steps were not distinctly visible, yet their prominent and more characteristic features were in sufficient relief, and I observed, that some of the most malignant and reckless spirits in the parish were assembled. In the eyes of those who stood at the altar, and whom I knew to be invested with authority over the others, I could perceive gleams of some latent and ferocious purpose, kindled, as I soon observed, into a fiercer expression of vengeance, by the additional excitement of ardent spirits, with which they had stimulated themselves to a point of determination that mocked at the apprehension of all future responsibility, either in this world or the next.

The welcome which I received on joining them was far different from the boisterous good-humour that used to mark our greetings on other occasions: just a nod of the head from this or that person, on the part of those *who sat*, with a *ghud dhemur tha thu?** in a suppressed voice, even below a common whisper: but from the standing group, who were evidently the projectors of the enterprise, I received a convulsive grasp of the hand, accompanied by a fierce and desperate look, that seemed to search my eye and countenance, to try if I were a person likely to shrink from whatever they had resolved to execute. It is surprising to think of the powerful expression which a moment of intense interest or great danger is capable of giving to the eye, the features, and the slightest actions, especially in those whose station in society does not require them to constrain nature, by the force of social courtesies, into habits that conceal their natural emotions. None of the standing group spoke; but as each of them wrung my hand in silence, his eye was fixed on mine, with an expression of drunken confidence and secresy, and an insolent determination not to be gainsaid without peril. If looks could be translated with certainty, they seemed to say, "We are bound upon a project of vengeance, and if *you* do *not* join us, remember that we *can* revenge." Along with this grasp, they did not forget to remind me of the common bond by which we were united, for each man gave me the secret grip of Ribbondism in a manner that made the joints of my fingers ache for some minutes afterwards.

There was one present, however—the highest in authority—whose actions and demeanour were calm and unexcited. He seemed to labour

* How are you?

under no unusual influence whatever, but evinced a serenity so placid and philosophical, that I attributed the silence of the sitting group, and the restraint which curbed in the out-breaking passions of those who *stood*, entirely to his presence. He was a schoolmaster, who taught his daily school in *that* chapel, and acted also, on Sunday, in the capacity of clerk to the priest—an excellent and amiable old man, who knew little of his illegal connexions and atrocious conduct.

When the ceremonies of brotherly recognition and friendship were past, the Captain (by which title I shall designate the last-mentioned person) stooped, and, raising a jar of whiskey on the corner of the altar, held a wine-glass to its neck, which he filled, and with a calm nod, handed it to me to drink. I shrunk back, with an instinctive horror, at the profaneness of such an act, in the house, and on the altar of God, and peremptorily refused to taste the proffered draught. He smiled mildly at what he considered my superstition, and added quietly, and in a low voice, "You 'll be wantin' it I'm thinkin', afther the wettin' you got."

"Wet or dry," said I—

"Stop, man!" he replied, in the same tone; "spake low. But why wouldn't you take the whiskey? Sure there 's as holy people to the fore as you: didn't they all take it? An' I wish we may never do worse nor dhrink a harmless glass o' whiskey, to keep the cowld out, any way."

"Well," said I, "I'll jist trust to God and the consequences, for the cowld, Paddy, ma bouchal; but a blessed dhrop of it won't be crossin' my lips, avick; so no more ghosther about it;—dhrink it yourself, if you like. Maybe you want it as much as I do; wherein I've the patthern of a good big-coat upon me, so thick, your sowl, that if it was rainin' bullocks, a dhrop wouldn't get undher the nap of it."

He gave me a calm, but keen glance, as I spoke.

"Well, Jim," said he, "it 's a good comrade you 've got for the weather that 's in it; but, in the mane time, to set you a dacent patthern, I 'll just take this myself,"—saying which, with the jar still upon its side, and the fore-finger of his left hand in its neck, he swallowed the spirits—"It 's the first I dhrank to-night," he added, "nor would I dhrink it now, only to show you that I 've heart an' spirit to do the thing that we 're all bound an' sworn to, when the proper time comes;" after which he laid down the glass, and turned up the jar, with much coolness, upon the altar.

During our conversation, those who had been summoned to this mysterious meeting were pouring in fast; and as each person approached the altar, he received from one to two or three glasses of whiskey, according as he chose to limit himself; but, to do them justice, there were not a few of those present, who, in despite of their own desire, and the Captain's express invitation, refused to taste it in the house of God's worship. Such, however, as were scrupulous he afterwards recommended to take it on the outside of the chapel door, which they did, as, by that means, the sacrilege of the act was supposed to be evaded.

About one o'clock they were all assembled except six: at least so the Captain asserted, on looking at a written paper.

"Now, boys," said he, in the same low voice, "we are all present except the thraitors, whose names I am goin' to read to you; not that we are to count thim thraitors, till we know whether or not it was in their power to come. Any how, the night's terrible—but, boys, you're to know, that neither fire nor wather is to prevint you, when duly summoned to attind a meeting—particularly whin the summons is widout a name, as you have been told that there is always something of consequence to be done *thin*."

He then read out the names of those who were absent, in order that the real cause of their absence might be ascertained, declaring that they would be dealt with accordingly. After this, with his usual caution, he shut and bolted the door, and having put the key in his pocket, ascended the steps of the altar, and for some time traversed the little platform from which the priest usually addresses the congregation.

Until this night I had never contemplated the man's countenance with any particular interest; but as he walked the platform, I had an opportunity of observing him more closely. He was slight in person, apparently not thirty; and, on a first view, appeared to have nothing remarkable in his dress or features. I, however, was not the only person whose eyes were fixed upon him at that moment; in fact, every one present observed him with equal interest, for hitherto he had kept the object of the meeting perfectly secret, and of course we all felt anxious to know it. It was while he traversed the platform that I scrutinised his features with a hope, if possible, to glean from them some evidence of what was passing within him. I could, however, mark but little, and that little was at first rather from the intelligence which seemed to subsist between him and those whom I have already mentioned as *standing* against the altar, than from any indication of his own. Their gleaming eyes were fixed upon him with an intensity of savage and demon-like hope, which blazed out in flashes of malignant triumph, as upon turning, he threw a cool but rapid glance at them, to intimate the progress he was making in the subject to which he devoted the undivided energies of his mind. But in the course of his meditation, I could observe, on one or two occasions, a dark shade come over his countenance, that contracted his brow into a deep furrow, and it was then, for the first time, that I saw the satanic expression of which his face, by a very slight motion of its muscles, was capable. His hands, during this silence, closed and opened convulsively; his eyes shot out two or three baleful glances, first to his confederates, and afterwards vacantly into the deep gloom of the lower part of the chapel; his teeth ground against each other, like those of a man whose revenge burns to reach a distant enemy, and finally, after having wound himself up to a certain determination, his features relapsed into their original calm and undisturbed expression.

At this moment a loud laugh, having something supernatural in it, rang out wildly from the darkness of the chapel; he stopped, and putting his open hand over his brows, peered down into the gloom, and said calmly in Irish, "*Bee dhu husth; ha nihl anam inh:*—hold your tongue, it is not yet time."

Every eye was now directed to the same spot, but, in consequence of

its distance from the dim light on the altar, none could perceive the person from whom the laugh proceeded. It was, by this time, near two o'clock in the morning.

He now stood for a few moments on the platform, and his chest heaved with a depth of anxiety equal to the difficulty of the design he wished to accomplish:

"Brothers," said he—"for we are all brothers—sworn upon all that's blessed an' holy, to obey whatever them that's over us, *manin' among ourselves*, wishes us to do—are you now ready, in the name of God, upon whose althar I stand, to fulfil yer oaths?"

The words were scarcely uttered, when those who had *stood* beside the altar during the night, sprang from their places, and descending its steps rapidly, turned round, and raising their arms, exclaimed, "By all that's sacred an' holy, we're willin'."

In the meantime, those who *sat* upon the steps of the altar, instantly rose, and following the example of those who had just spoken, exclaimed after them, "To be sure—by all that's sacred an' holy, we're willin'."

"Now boys," said the Captain, "ar'n't ye big fools for your pains? an' one of ye doesn't know what I mane."

"You're our Captain," said one of those who had stood at the altar, "an' has yer ordhers from higher quarthers; of coorse, whatever ye command upon us we're bound to obey you in."

"Well," said he, smiling, "I only wanted to thry yez; an' by the oath ye tuck, there's not a captain in the county has as good a right to be proud of his min as I have. Well, ye won't rue it, maybe, when the right time comes; and for that same rason every one of ye must have a glass from the jar; thim that won't dhrink it *in* the chapel can dhrink it *widout;* an' here goes to open the door for them."

He then distributed another glass to every man who would accept it, and brought the jar afterwards to the chapel door, to satisfy the scruples of those who would not drink within. When this was performed, and all duly excited, he proceeded:—

"Now, brothers, you are solemnly sworn to obay me, and I'm sure there's no thraithur here that 'ud parjure himself for a thrifle; but *I'm* sworn to obay them that's above me, manin' still among ourselves; an' to show you that I don't scruple to do it, here goes!"

He then turned round, and taking the Missal between his hands placed it upon the altar. Hitherto every word was uttered in a low precautionary tone; but on grasping the book, he again turned round, and looking upon his confederates with the same satanic expression which marked his countenance before, he exclaimed, in a voice of deep determination, first kissing the book!

"By this sacred an' holy book of God, I will perform the action which we have met this night to accomplish, be that what it may; an' this I swear upon God's book, an' God's althar!"

On concluding, he struck the book violently with his open hand, thereby occasioning a very loud report.

At this moment the candle which burned before him went suddenly out, and the chapel was wrapped in pitchy darkness; the sound as if

of rushing wings fell upon our ears, and fifty voices dwelt upon the last words of his oath with wild and supernatural tones, that seemed to echo and to mock what he had sworn. There was a pause, and an exclamation of horror from all present: but the Captain was too cool and steady to be disconcerted. He immediately groped about until he got the candle, and proceeding calmly to a remote corner of the chapel, took up a half-burned peat which lay there, and after some trouble, succeeded in lighting it again. He then explained what had taken place; which indeed was easily done, as the candle happened to be extinguished by a pigeon which sat directly above it. The chapel, I should have observed, was at this time, like many country chapels, unfinished inside, and the pigeons of a neighbouring dove-cot had built nests among the rafters of the unceiled roof; which circumstance also explained the rushing of the wings, for the birds had been affrighted by the sudden loudness of the noise. The mocking voices were nothing but the echoes, rendered naturally more awful by the scene, the mysterious object of the meeting, and the solemn hour of the night.

When the candle was again lighted, and these startling circumstances accounted for, the persons whose vengeance had been deepening more and more during the night, rushed to the altar in a body, where each, in a voice trembling with passionate eagerness, repeated the oath, and as every word was pronounced, the same echoes heightened the wildness of the horrible ceremony, by their long and unearthly tones. The countenances of these human tigers were livid with suppressed rage; their knit brows, compressed lips, and kindled eyes, fell under the dim light of the taper, with an expression calculated to sicken any heart not absolutely diabolical.

As soon as this dreadful rite was completed, we were again startled by several loud bursts of laughter, which proceeded from the lower darkness of the chapel; and the Captain, on hearing them, turned to the place, and reflecting for a moment, said in Irish, "*Gutsho nish, avohelhee*—come hither now, boys."

A rush immediately took place from the corner in which they had secreted themselves all the night; and seven men appeared, whom we instantly recognised as brothers and cousins of certain persons who had been convicted, some time before, for breaking into the house of an honest poor man in the neighbourhood, from whom, after having treated him with barbarous violence, they took away such fire-arms as he kept for his own protection.

It was evidently not the Captain's intention to have produced these persons until the oath should have been generally taken, but the exulting mirth with which they enjoyed the success of his scheme betrayed them, and put him to the necessity of bringing them forward somewhat before the concerted moment.

The scene which now took place was beyond all power of description; peals of wild, fiend-like yells rang through the chapel, as the party which *stood* on the altar and that which had crouched in the darkness met; wringing of hands, leaping in triumph, striking of sticks and fire-arms against the ground and the altar itself, dancing and cracking of fingers, marked the triumph of some hellish determination. Even the Captain for

a time was unable to restrain their fury; but, at length, he mounted the platform before the altar once more, and with a stamp of his foot, recalled their attention to himself and the matter in hand.

"Boys," said he, "enough of this, and too much; an' well for us it is that the chapel is in a lonely place, or our foolish noise might do us no good. Let thim that swore so manfully jist now, stand a one side, till the rest kiss the book one by one."

The proceedings, however, had by this time taken too fearful a shape for even the Captain to compel them to a blindfold oath; the first man he called flatly refused to answer, until he should hear the nature of the service that was required. This was echoed by the remainder, who, taking courage from the firmness of this person, declared generally that, until they first knew the business they were to execute, none of them would take the oath. The Captain's lip quivered slightly, and his brow again became knit with the same hellish expression, which I have remarked gave him so much the appearance of an embodied fiend; but this speedily passed away, and was succeeded by a malignant sneer, in which lurked, if there ever did in a sneer, "a laughing devil," calmly, determinedly atrocious.

"It wasn't worth yer whiles to refuse the oath," said he mildly, "for the truth is, I had next to nothing for yez to do. Not a hand, maybe, would have to *rise*, only jist to look on, an' if any resistance would be made, to show yourselves; yer numbers would soon make them see that resistance would be no use whatever in the present case. At all evints, the oath of *secresy must* be taken, or woe be to him that will refuse *that;* he won't know the day, nor the hour, nor the minute, when he'll be made a spatch-cock of."

He then turned round, and, placing his right hand on the Missal, swore, "In the presence of God, and before his holy altar, that whatever might take place that night he would keep secret, from man or mortal, except the priest, and that neither bribery, nor imprisonment, nor death, would wring it from his heart."

Having done this, he again struck the book violently, as if to confirm the energy with which he swore, and then calmly descending the steps, stood with a serene countenance, like a man conscious of having performed a good action. As this oath did not pledge those who refused to take the other to the perpetration of any specific crime, it was readily taken by all present. Preparations were then made to execute what was intended: the half-burned turf was placed in a little pot; another glass of whiskey was distributed; and the door being locked by the Captain, who kept the key as parish clerk and schoolmaster, the crowd departed silently from the chapel.

The moment those who lay in the darkness, during the night, made their appearance at the altar, we knew at once the persons we were to visit; for, as I said before, they were related to the miscreants whom one of those persons had convicted, in consequence of their midnight attack upon himself and his family. The Captain's object in keeping them unseen was, that those present, not being aware of the duty about to be imposed on them, might have less hesitation about swearing to its fulfilment. Our conjectures were correct; for on leaving the chapel we directed our steps to the house in which this devoted man resided.

The night was still stormy, but without rain; it was rather dark, too, though not so as to prevent us from seeing the clouds careering swiftly through the air. The dense curtain which had overhung and obscured the horizon was now broken, and large sections of the sky were clear, and thinly studded with stars that looked dim and watery, as did indeed the whole firmament; for in some places black clouds were still visible, threatening a continuance of tempestuous weather. The road appeared washed and gravelly; every dike was full of yellow water; and every little rivulet and larger stream dashed its hoarse murmur in our ears; every blast, too, was cold, fierce, and wintry, sometimes driving us back to a stand still, and again, when a turn in the road would bring it in our backs, whirling us along for a few steps with involuntary rapidity. At length the fated dwelling became visible, and a short consultation was held in a sheltered place, between the captain and the two parties who seemed so eager for its destruction. Their fire-arms were now loaded, and their bayonets and short pikes, the latter shod and pointed with iron, were also got ready. The live coal which was brought in the small pot had become extinguished; but to remedy this, two or three persons from a remote part of the county entered a cabin on the wayside, and, under pretence of lighting their own and their comrades' pipes, procured a coal of fire, for so they called a lighted turf. From the time we left the chapel until this moment a profound silence had been maintained, a circumstance which, when I considered the number of persons present, and the mysterious and dreaded object of their journey, had a most appalling effect upon my spirits.

At length we arrived within fifty perches of the house, walking in a compact body, and with as little noise as possible; but it seemed as if the very elements had conspired to frustrate our design, for on advancing within the shade of the farm-hedge, two or three persons found themselves up to the middle in water, and on stooping to ascertain more accurately the state of the place, we could see nothing but one immense sheet of it—spread like a lake over the meadows which surrounded the spot we wished to reach.

Fatal night! The very recollection of it, when associated with the fearful tempests of the elements, grows, if that were possible, yet more wild and revolting. Had we been engaged in any innocent or benevolent enterprise, there was something in our situation just then that had a touch of interest in it to a mind imbued with a relish for the savage beauties of nature. There we stood, about a hundred and thirty in number, our dark forms bent forward, peering into the dusky expanse of water, with its dim gleams of reflected light, broken by the weltering of the mimic waves into ten thousand fragments, whilst the few stars that overhung it in the firmament appeared to shoot through it in broken lines, and to be multiplied fifty-fold in the gloomy mirror on which we gazed.

Over us was a stormy sky, and around us a darkness through which we could only distinguish, in outline, the nearest objects, whilst the wild wind swept strongly and dismally upon us. When it was discovered that the common pathway to the house was inundated, we were about to abandon our object and return home. The Captain, however, stooped down low for a moment, and, almost closing his eyes, looked along the surface

of the waters; and then, rising himself very calmly, said, in his usual quiet tone, "Ye needn't go back, boys, I've found a way; jist follow me."

He immediately took a more circuitous direction, by which we reached a causeway that had been raised for the purpose of giving a free passage to and from the house, during such inundations as the present. Along this we had advanced more than half way, when we discovered a breach in it, which, as afterwards appeared, had that night been made by the strength of the flood. This, by means of our sticks and pikes, we found to be about three feet deep, and eight yards broad. Again we were at a loss how to proceed, when the fertile brain of the Captain devised a method of crossing it.

"Boys," said he, "of coorse you've all played at leap-frog; very well, strip and go in, a dozen of you, lean one upon the back of another from this to the opposite bank, where one must stand facing the outside man, both their shoulders agin one another, that the outside man may be supported. Then *we* can creep over you, an' a dacent bridge you'll be, any way."

This was the work of only a few minutes, and in less than ten we were all safely over.

Merciful Heaven! how I sicken at the recollection of what is to follow! On reaching the dry bank, we proceeded instantly, and in profound silence, to the house; the Captain divided us into companies, and then assigned to each division its proper station. The two parties who had been so vindictive all the night, he kept about himself; for of those who were present, they only were in his confidence, and knew his nefarious purpose; their number was about fifteen. Having made these dispositions, he, at the head of about five of them, approached the house on the windy side, for the fiend possessed a coolness which enabled him to seize upon every possible advantage. That he had combustibles about him was evident, for in less than fifteen minutes nearly one half of the house was enveloped in flames. On seeing this, the others rushed over to the spot where he and his gang were standing, and remonstrated earnestly, but in vain; the flames now burst forth with renewed violence, and as they flung their strong light upon the faces of the foremost group, I think hell itself could hardly present anything more satanic than their countenances, now worked up into a paroxysm of infernal triumph at their own revenge. The Captain's look had lost all its calmness, every feature started out into distinct malignity, the curve in his brow was deep, and ran up to the root of the hair, dividing his face into two segments, that did not seem to have been designed for each other. His lips were half open, and the corners of his mouth a little brought back on each side, like those of a man expressing intense hatred and triumph over an enemy who is in the death-struggle under his grasp. His eyes blazed from beneath his knit eye-brows with a fire that seemed to be lighted up in the infernal pit itself. It is unnecessary, and only painful, to describe the rest of his gang; demons might have been proud of such horrible visages as they exhibited; for they worked under all the power of hatred, revenge, and joy; and these passions blended into one terrible scowl, enough almost to blast any human eye that would venture to look upon it.

When the others attempted to intercede for the lives of the inmates, there were at least fifteen guns and pistols levelled at them.

"Another word," said the Captain, "an' you 're a corpse where you stand, or the first man who will dare to spake for them; no, no, it wasn't to spare them we came here. 'No mercy' is the pass-word for the night, an' by the sacred oath I swore beyant in the chapel, any one among yez that will attempt to show it, will find none at my hand. Surround the house, boys, I tell ye, I hear them stirring. 'No quarther—no mercy,' is the ordher of the night."

Such was his command over these misguided creatures, that in an instant there was a ring round the house to prevent the escape of the unhappy inmates, should the raging element give them time to attempt it; for none present durst withdraw themselves from the scene, not only from an apprehension of the Captain's present vengeance, or that of his gang, but because they knew that even had they then escaped, an early and certain death awaited them from a quarter against which they had no means of defence. The hour now was about half-past two o'clock. Scarcely had the last words escaped from the Captain's lips, when one of the windows of the house was broken, and a human head, having the hair in a blaze, was descried, apparently a woman's, if one might judge by the profusion of burning tresses, and the softness of the tones, notwithstanding that it called, or rather shrieked, aloud, for help and mercy. The only reply to this was the whoop from the Captain and his gang, of "No mercy—no mercy!" and that instant the former, and one of the latter, rushed to the spot, and ere the action could be perceived, the head was transfixed with a bayonet and a pike, both having entered it together. The word "mercy" was divided in her mouth; a short silence ensued, the head hung down on the window, but was instantly tossed back into the flames!

This action occasioned a cry of horror from all present, except the *gang* and their leader, which startled and enraged the latter so much, that he ran towards one of them, and had his bayonet, now reeking with the blood of its innocent victim, raised to plunge it in his body, when, dropping the point, he said in a piercing whisper, that hissed in the ears of all: "It 's no use *now*, you know; if one 's to hang, all will hang; so our safest way, you persave, is to lave none of them to tell the story. Ye *may* go now, if you wish; but it won't save a hair of your heads. You cowardly set! I knew if I had tould yez the sport, that none of you, except my *own* boys, would come, so I jist played a thrick upon you; but remimber what you are sworn to, and stand to the oath ye tuck."

Unhappily, notwithstanding the wetness of the preceding weather, the materials of the house were extremely combustible; the whole dwelling was now one body of glowing flame, yet the shouts and shrieks within rose awfully above its crackling and the voice of the storm, for the wind once more blew in gusts, and with great violence. The doors and windows were all torn open, and such of those within as had escaped the flames rushed towards them, for the purpose of further escape, and of claiming mercy at the hands of their destroyers; but whenever they appeared, the unearthly cry of "NO MERCY" rung upon their ears for a moment, and for a moment only, for they were flung back at the points of

the weapons which the demons had brought with them to make the work of vengeance more certain.

As yet there were many persons in the house, whose cry for life was strong as despair, and who clung to it with all the awakened powers of reason and instinct. The ear of man could hear nothing so strongly calculated to stifle the demon of cruelty and revenge within him, as the long and wailing shrieks which rose beyond the elements, in tones that were carried off rapidly upon the blast, until they died away in the darkness that lay behind the surrounding hills. Had not the house been in a solitary situation, and the hour the dead of night, any person sleeping within a moderate distance must have heard them, for such a cry of sorrow rising into a yell of despair was almost sufficient to have awakened the dead. It was lost, however, upon the hearts and ears that heard it: to them, though in justice be it said, to only comparatively a few of them, it appeared as delightful as the tones of soft and entrancing music.

The claims of the surviving sufferers were now modified; they supplicated merely to suffer death *by the weapons of their enemies;* they were willing to bear that, provided they should be allowed to escape from the flames; but no—the horrors of the conflagration were calmly and malignantly gloried in by their merciless assassins, who deliberately flung them back into all their tortures. In the course of a few minutes a man appeared upon the side-wall of the house, nearly naked; his figure, as he stood against the sky in horrible relief, was so finished a picture of woebegone agony and supplication, that it is yet as distinct in my memory as if I were again present at the scene. Every muscle, now in motion by the powerful agitation of his sufferings, stood out upon his limbs and neck, giving him an appearance of desperate strength, to which by this time he must have been wrought up; the perspiration poured from his frame, and the veins and arteries of his neck were inflated to a surprising thickness. Every moment he looked down into the flames which were rising to where he stood; and as he looked, the indescribable horror which flitted over his features might have worked upon the devil himself to relent. His words were few:—

"My child," said he, "is still safe, she is an infant, a young crathur that never harmed you, nor any one—she is still safe. Your mothers, your wives, have young innocent childhre like it. Oh, spare her, think for a moment that it's one of your own: spare it, as you hope to meet a just God, or if you don't, in mercy shoot me first—put an end to me, before I see her burned!"

The Captain approached him coolly and deliberately. "You'll prosecute no one now, you bloody informer," said he: "you'll convict no more boys for takin' an ould gun an' pistol from you, or for givin' you a neighbourly knock or two into the bargain."

Just then, from a window opposite him, proceeded the shrieks of a woman, who appeared at it, with the infant in her arms. She herself was almost scorched to death; but, with the presence of mind and humanity of her sex, she was about to put the little babe out of the window. The Captain noticed this, and, with characteristic atrocity, thrust, with a sharp bayonet, the little innocent, along with the person who endea-

voured to rescue it, into the red flames, where they both perished. This was the work of an instant. Again he approached the man: "Your child is a coal now," said he, with deliberate mockery; "I pitched it in myself, on the point of this,"—showing the weapon—"an' now is your turn,"—saying which, he clambered up, by the assistance of his gang, who stood with a front of pikes and bayonets bristling to receive the wretched man, should he attempt, in his despair, to throw himself from the wall. The Captain got up, and placing the point of his bayonet against his shoulder, flung him into the fiery element that raged behind him. He uttered one wild and terrific cry, as he fell back, and no more. After this nothing was heard but the crackling of the fire, and the rushing of the blast: all that had possessed life within were consumed, amounting either to eight or eleven persons.

When this was accomplished, those who took an active part in the murder, stood for some time about the conflagration; and as it threw its red light upon their fierce faces and rough persons, soiled as they now were with smoke and black streaks of ashes, the scene seemed to be changed to hell, the murderers to spirits of the damned, rejoicing over the arrival and the torture of some guilty soul. The faces of those who kept aloof from the slaughter were blanched to the whiteness of death: some of them fainted, and others were in such agitation that they were compelled to lean on their comrades. They became actually powerless with horror: yet to such a scene were they brought by the pernicious influence of Ribbonism.

It was only when the last victim went down, that the conflagration shot up into the air with most unbounded fury. The house was large, deeply thatched, and well furnished; and the broad red pyramid rose up with fearful magnificence towards the sky. Abstractedly it had sublimity, but now it was associated with nothing in my mind but blood and terror. It was not, however, without a purpose that the Captain and his gang stood to contemplate its effect. "Boys," said he, "we had betther be sartin that all's safe; who knows but there might be some of the sarpents crouchin' under a hape o' rubbish, to come out an' gibbet us to-morrow or next day: we had betther wait a while, anyhow, if it was only to see the blaze."

Just then the flames rose majestically to a surprising height. Our eyes followed their direction; and we perceived, for the first time, that the dark clouds above, together with the intermediate air, appeared to reflect back, or rather to have caught the red hue of the fire. The hills and country about us appeared with an alarming distinctness; but the most picturesque part of it was the effect of reflection of the blaze on the floods that spread over the surrounding plains. These, in fact, appeared to be one broad mass of liquid copper, for the motion of the breaking waters caught from the blaze of the high waving column, as reflected in them, a glaring light, which eddied, and rose, and fluctuated, as if the flood itself had been a lake of molten fire.

Fire, however, destroys rapidly. In a short time the flames sank—became weak and flickering—by and by, they shot out only in fits—the crackling of the timbers died away—the surrounding darkness deepened—

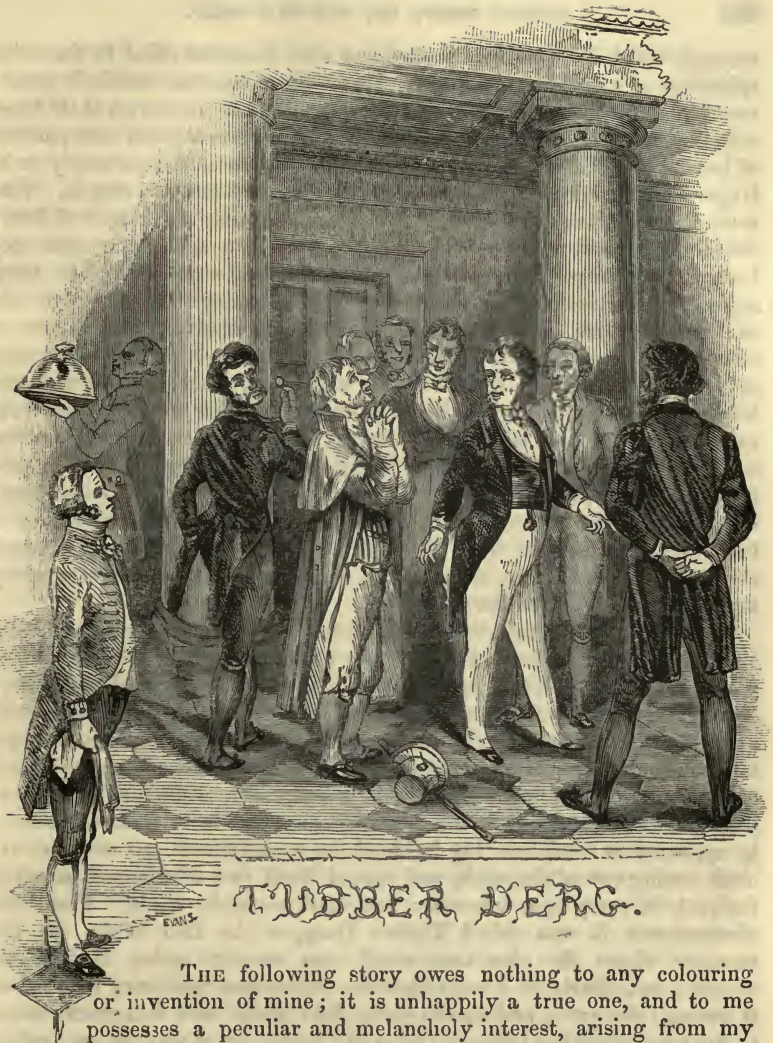
and, ere long, the faint light was overpowered by the thick volumes of smoke that rose from the ruins of the house, and its murdered inhabitants.

"Now, boys," said the Captain, "all is safe—we may go. Remember, every man of you, what you've sworn this night, on the book an' altar of God—not on a heretic Bible. If you perjure yourselves, you may hang us; but let me tell you, for your comfort, that if you do, there is them livin' that will take care the lase of your own lives will be but short."

After this we dispersed every man to his own home.

Reader,—not many months elapsed ere I saw the bodies of this Captain, whose name was Patrick Devann, and all those who were actively concerned in the perpetration of this deed of horror, withering in the wind, where they hung gibbeted, near the scene of their nefarious villany; and while I inwardly thanked Heaven for my own narrow and almost undeserved escape, I thought in my heart how seldom, even in this world, justice fails to overtake the murderer, and to enforce the righteous judgment of God—that "whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed."

*** This tale of terror is, unfortunately, too true. The scene of hellish murder detailed in it lies at Wildgoose Lodge, in the county of Louth, within about four miles of Carrickmacross, and nine of Dundalk. No such multitudinous murder has occurred, under similar circumstances, except the burning of the Sheas, in the county of Tipperary. The name of the family burned in Wildgoose Lodge was Lynch. One of them had, shortly before this fatal night, prosecuted and convicted some of the neighbouring Ribbonmen, who visited him with severe marks of their displeasure, in consequence of his having refused to enrol himself as a member of their body. The language of the story is partly fictitious; but the facts are pretty closely such as were developed during the trial of the murderers. Both parties were Roman Catholics, and either twenty-five or twenty-eight of those who took an active part in the burning, were hanged and gibbeted in different parts of the county of Louth. Devann, the ringleader, hung for some months in chains, within about a hundred yards of his own house, and about half a mile from Wildgoose Lodge. His mother could neither go into nor out of her cabin, without seeing his body swinging from the gibbet. Her usual exclamation on looking at him was—"God be good to the sowl of my poor marthyr!" The peasantry, too, frequently exclaimed, on seeing him, "Poor Paddy!" A gloomy fact that speaks volumes!



# TUBBER DERG.

The following story owes nothing to any colouring or invention of mine; it is unhappily a true one, and to me possesses a peculiar and melancholy interest, arising from my intimate knowledge of the man whose fate it holds up as a moral lesson to Irish landlords. I knew him well, and many a day and hour have I played about his knee, and ran, in my boyhood, round his path, when, as he said to himself, the world was no trouble to him.

On the south side of a sloping tract of light ground, lively, warm, and productive, stood a white, moderate-sized farm-house, which, in consequence of its conspicuous situation, was a prominent and, we may add, a graceful object in the landscape of which it formed a part. The spot whereon it stood was a swelling natural terrace, the soil of which was heavier and richer than that of the adjoining lands. On each side of the house stood a clump of old beeches, the only survivors of that species then remaining in the country. These beeches extended behind the house in a kind of angle, with opening enough at their termination to form a vista,

through which its white walls glistened with beautiful effect in the calm splendour of a summer evening. Above the mound on which it stood, rose two steep hills, overgrown with furze and fern, except on their tops, which were clothed with purple heath; they were also covered with patches of broom, and studded with gray rocks, which sometimes rose singly or in larger masses, pointed or rounded into curious and fantastic shapes. Exactly between these hills the sun went down during the month of June, and nothing could be in finer relief than the rocky and picturesque outlines of their sides, as crowned with thorns and clumps of wild ash, they appeared to overhang the valley whose green foliage was gilded by the sun-beams, which lit up the scene into radiant beauty. The bottom of this natural chasm, which opened against the deep crimson of the evening sky, was nearly upon a level with the house, and completely so with the beeches that surrounded it. Brightly did the sinking sun fall upon their tops, whilst the neat white house below, in their quiet shadow, sent up its wreath of smoke among their branches, itself an emblem of contentment, industry, and innocence. It was, in fact, a lovely situation; perhaps the brighter to me, that its remembrance is associated with days of happiness and freedom from the cares of a world, which, like a distant mountain, darkens as we approach it, and only exhausts us in struggling to climb its rugged and barren paths.

There was to the south-west of this house another little hazel glen, that ended in a precipice formed by a single rock some thirty feet high, over which tumbled a crystal cascade into a basin worn in its hard bed below. From this basin the stream murmured away through the copse-wood, until it joined a larger rivulet that passed, with many a winding, through a fine extent of meadows adjoining it. Across the foot of this glen, and past the door of the house we have described, ran a bridle road, from time immemorial; on which, as the traveller ascended it towards the house, he appeared to track his way in blood, for a chalybeate *spa* arose at its head, oozing out of the earth, and spread itself in a crimson stream over the path in every spot whereon a foot-mark could be made. From this circumstance it was called Tubber Derg, or the Red Well. In the meadow where the glen terminated, was another spring of delicious crystal; and clearly do I remember the ever-beaten path-way that led to it through the grass, and up the green field which rose in a gentle slope to the happy-looking house of Owen M'Carthy, for so was the man called who resided under its peaceful roof.

I will not crave your pardon, gentle reader, for dwelling at such length upon a scene so dear to my heart as this, because I write not now so much for your gratification as my own. Many an eve of gentle May have I pulled the Maygowans which grew about that well, and over that smooth meadow. Often have I raised my voice to its shrillest pitch, that I might hear its echoes rebounding in the bottom of the green and still glen, where silence, so to speak, was deepened by the continuous murmur of the cascade above; and when the cuckoo uttered her first note from among the hawthorns on its side, with what trembling anxiety did I, an urchin of some eight or nine years, look under my right foot for the white hair, whose charm was such, that by keeping it about me the first female name I should hear was destined, I believed in my soul, to be that of my

future wife *. Sweet was the song of the thrush, and mellow the whistle of the blackbird, as they rose in the stillness of evening over the "hirken shaws" and green dells of this secluded spot of rural beauty. Far, too, could the rich voice of Owen M'Carthy be heard along the hills and meadows, as, with a little chubby urchin at his knee, and another in his arms, he sat on a bench beside his own door, singing the "Trougha" in his native Irish; whilst Kathleen his wife, with her two maids, each crooning a low song, sat before the door, milking the cows, whose sweet breath mingled its perfume with the warm breeze of evening.

Owen M'Carthy was descended from a long line of honest ancestors, whose names had never, within the memory of man, been tarnished by the commission of a mean or disreputable action. They were always a kind-hearted family, but stern and proud in the common intercourse of life. They believed themselves to be, and probably were, a branch of the MacCarthy More stock; and, although only the possessors of a small farm, it was singular to observe the effect which this conviction produced upon their bearing and manners. To it might, perhaps, be attributed the high and stoical integrity for which they were remarkable. This severity, however, was no proof that they wanted feeling, or were insensible to the misery and sorrows of others: in all the little cares and perplexities that chequered the peaceful neighbourhood in which they lived, they were ever the first to console, or, if necessary, to support a distressed neighbour with the means which God had placed in their possession; for, being industrious, they were seldom poor. Their words were few, but sincere, and generally promised less than the honest hearts that dictated them intended to perform. There is in some persons a hereditary feeling of just principle, the result neither of education nor of a clear moral sense, but rather a kind of instinctive honesty which descends, like a constitutional bias, from father to son, pervading every member of the family. It is difficult to define this, or to assign its due position in the scale of human virtues. It exists in the midst of the grossest ignorance, and influences the character in the absence of better principles. Such was the impress which marked so strongly the family of which I speak. No one would ever think of imputing a dishonest act to the M'Carthys; nor would any person acquainted with them, hesitate for a moment to consider their word as good as the bond of another. I do not mean to say, however, that their motives of action were not higher than this instinctive honesty; far from it: but I say, that they possessed it in *addition* to a strong feeling of family pride, and a correct knowledge of their moral duties.

I can only take up Owen M'Carthy at that part of the past to which my memory extends. He was then a tall, fine-looking young man; silent, but kind. One of the earliest events within my recollection is his wedding; after that the glimpse of his state and circumstances are imperfect; but as I grew up, they became more connected, and I am able to remember him the father of four children; an industrious inoffensive small farmer, beloved, respected, and honoured. No man could rise, be it ever so early, who would not find Owen up before him; no man could

* Such is the superstition; and, as I can tell, faithfully is it believed.

anticipate him in an early crop, and if a widow or a sick acquaintance were unable to get in their harvest, Owen was certain to collect the neighbours to assist them; to be the first there himself, with quiet benevolence, encouraging them to a zealous performance of the friendly task in which they were engaged.

It was, I believe, soon after his marriage, that the lease of the farm held by him expired. Until that time he had been able to live with perfect independence; but even the enormous rise of one pound per acre, though it deprived him in a great degree of his usual comforts, did not sink him below the bare necessaries of life. For some years after that he could still serve a deserving neighbour; and never was the hand of Owen M'Carthy held back from the wants and distresses of those whom he knew to be honest.

I remember once an occasion upon which a widow Murray applied to him for a loan of five pounds, to prevent her two cows from being auctioned for half a year's rent, of which she only wanted that sum. Owen sat at dinner with his family when she entered the house in tears, and, as well as her agitation of mind permitted, gave him a detailed account of her embarrassment.

"The blessin' o' God be upon all here," said she, on entering.

"The double o' that to you, Rosha," replied Owen's wife: "won't you sit in an' be atin'?—here's a sate beside Nanny; come over, Rosha."

Owen only nodded to her, and continued to eat his dinner, as if he felt no interest in her distress. Rosha sat down at a distance, and with the corner of a red handkerchief to her eyes, shed tears in that bitterness of feeling which marks the helplessness of honest industry under the pressure of calamity.

"In the name o' goodness, Rosha," said Mrs. M'Carthy, "what ails you, asthore? Sure Jimmy—God spare him to you—wouldn't be dead?"

"Glory be to God! no, avourneen machree. Och, och! but it 'ud be the black sight, an' the black day, that 'ud see my brave boy, the staff of our support, an' the bread of our mouth, taken away from us!—No, no, Kathleen dear, it 's not that bad wid me yet. I hope we 'll never live to see his manly head laid down before us. 'Twas his own manliness, indeed, brought it an him—backin' the sack when he was bringin' home our last *meldhre* * from the mill; for you see he should do it, the crathur, to show his strinth, an' the sack, when he got it an was too heavy for him, an' hurted the small of his back; for his bones, you see, are too young, an' hadn't time to fill up yet. No, avourneen. Glory be to God! he 's gettin' betther wid me!" and the poor creature's eyes glistened with delight through her tears and the darkness of her affliction.

Without saying a word, Owen, when she finished the eulogium on her son, rose, and taking her forcibly by the shoulder, set her down at the table, on which a large potful of potatoes had been spread out, with a circle in the middle for a dish of rashers and eggs, into which dish every right hand of those about it was thrust, with a quickness that clearly illustrated the principle of competition as a stimulus to action.

"Spare your breath," said Owen, placing her rather roughly upon the

* Meldhre—whatever quantity of grain is brought to the mill to be ground on one occasion.

seat, "an' take share of what's goin': when all 's cleared off we 'll hear you, but the sorra word till then."

"Musha, Owen," said the poor woman, "you 're the same man still; sure we all know your ways; I 'll strive, avourneen, to ate—I 'll strive, asthore—to plase you, an' the Lord bless you an' yours, an' may you never be as I an' my fatherless childhre are this sorrowful day!" and she accompanied her words by a flood of tears.

Owen, without evincing the slightest sympathy, withdrew himself from the table. Not a muscle of his face was moved; but as the cat came about his feet at the time, he put his foot under her, and flung her as easily as possible to the lower end of the kitchen.

"Arrah, what harm did the crathur do," asked his wife, "that you'd kick her for, that way? an' why but you *ate out* your dinner?"

"*I'm* done," he replied, "but that's no rason that Rosha, an' you, an' thim boys that has the work afore them, shouldn't finish your male's mate."

Poor Rosha thought that by his withdrawing he had already suspected the object of her visit, and of course concluded that her chance of succeeding was very slender.

The wife, who guessed what she wanted, as well as the nature of her suspicion, being herself as affectionate and obliging as Owen, reverted to the subject, in order to give her an opportunity of proceeding.

"Somethin' bitther an' out o' the common coorse, is a throuble to you, Rosha," said she, "or you wouldn't be in the state you 're in. The Lord look down on you this day, you poor crathur—widout the father of your childhre to stand up for you, an' your only other depindance laid on the broad of his back, all as one as a cripple; but no matther, Rosha; trust to Him that can be a husband to you, an' a father to your orphans—trust to Him, an' his blessed mother in heaven, this day, an' never fear but they 'll *rise* up a frind for you. Musha, Owen ate your dinner as you ought to do, wid your capers! How can you take a spade in your hand upon that morsel?"

"Finish your own," said her husband, "an' never heed me; jist let me alone. Don't you see that if I wanted it, I 'd ate it, an' what more would you have about!"

"Well, acushla, it 's your own loss, sure, of a sartinty. An', Rosha, whisper, ahagur, what can Owen or I do for you? Throth, it would be a bad day we 'd see you at a *deshort* * for a friend, for you never wor nothin' else nor a civil, oblagin' neighbour yourself; an' him that 's gone before—the Lord make his bed in heaven this day—was as good a warrant as ever broke bread, to sarve a friend, if it was at the hour of midnight."

"Ah! when I had *him*," exclaimed the distracted widow, "I never had occasion to trouble aither friend or neighbour; but he 's gone, an' now it 's otherwise wid me—glory be to God for all his mercies—a wurrah dheelish! Why, thin, since I must spake, an' has no other frind to go to—but somehow I doubt Owen looks dark upon me—sure I 'd put my hand to a stamp, if my word wouldn 't do for it, an' sign the blessed crass that saved us, for the payment of it; or I 'd give it to him in oats, for I hear you want some, Owen—Phatie oats it is, an' a betther shouldhered

* That is at a loss; or more properly speaking, taken short, which it means.

or fuller-lookin' grain never went undher a harrow—indeed, it 's it that 's the beauty, all out, if it 's good seed you want."

"What is it for, woman alive?" inquired Owen, as he kicked a three-legged stool out of his way.

"What is it for, is it? Och, Owen darlin', sure my two brave cows is lavin' me, Owen M'Murt, the driver, is over wid me beyant, an' has them ready to set off wid. I reared them both, the two of them, wid my own hands; *Cheehoney*, that knows my voice, an' would come to me from the fardest corner o' the field, is goin', an' nothin' will we have—nothin' will my poor sick boy have—but the black wather, or the dhry salt; besides the butther of them bein' lost to us for the rent, or a small taste of it, of an odd time, for poor Jimmy. Owen, next to God, I have no friend to depind upon but yourself!"

"Me!" said Owen, as if astonished. "Phoo, that 's quare enough! Now do you think, Rosha,—hut, hut, woman alive! Come, boys, you 're all done; out wid you to your spades, an' finish that *meerin** before night. Me!—hut, tut!"

"I have it all but five pounds, Owen, an' for the sake of him that 's in his grave—an' that, maybe, is able to put up his prayer for you"——

"An' what would you want *me* to do Rosha? Fitther for you to sit down an' finish your dinner, when it 's before you. I 'm goin' to get an' ould glove† that 's somewhere about this chist, for I must weed out that bit of oats before night, wid a blessin'," and, as he spoke he passed into another room, as if he had altogether forgotten her solicitation, and in a few minutes returned.

"Owen, avick!"—an' the blessin' of the fatherless be upon you, sure, an' many a one o' them you have, any how, Owen!"

"Well, Rosha—well?"

"Och, och, Owen, it 's low days wid me to be depindin' upon the sthranger? Little thim that reared me ever thought it 'ud come to this. You know I 'm a dacent father's child, an' I have stooped to you, Owen M'Carthy—what I 'd scorn to do to any other but yourself—poor an' friendless as I stand here before you. Let them take the cows, thin, from my childhre; but the father of the fatherless will support thim an' me. Och, but it 's well for the O'Donohoes that their landlord lives at home among themselves, for may the heavens look down on me, I wouldn 't know where to find mine, if one sight of him 'ud save me an' my childhre from the grave! The Agent even, he lives in Dublin, an' how could I lave my sick boy an' small *girshas* by themselves, to go a hundre miles, an' maybe not see him afther all. Little hopes I 'd have from him, even if I did; he 's paid for gatherin' in his rents; but it 's well known he wants the touch of nathur for the sufferins of the poor, an' of them that 's honest in their intintions."

"I 'll go over wid you, Rosha, if that will be of any use," replied Owen, composedly; "come, I 'll go an' spake to Frank M'Murt."

"The sorra blame I blame him, Owen," replied Rosha, "his bread 's depindin' upon the likes of sich doins, an' he can 't get over it; but a

* Meerin—a march ditch, a boundary.

† In "hand-weeding," old gloves are used to prevent the hands from being injured by the thistles.

word from you, Owen, will save me, for who ever refused to take the word of a M'Carthy?"

When Owen and the widow arrived at the house of the latter, they found the situation of the bailiff laughable in the extreme. Her eldest son, who had been confined to his bed by a hurt received in his back, was up, and had got the unfortunate driver, who was rather old, wedged in between the dresser and the wall, where his cracked voice—for he was asthmatic—was raised to the highest pitch, calling for assistance. Beside him was a large tub half-filled with water, into which the little ones were emptying small jugs, carried at the top of their speed from a puddle before the door. In the meantime, Jemmy was tugging at the bailiff with all his strength—fortunately for that personage, it was but little—with the most sincere intention of inverting him into the tub which contained as much muddy water as would have been sufficient to make him a subject for the deliberation of a coroner and twelve honest men. Nothing could be more conscientiously attempted than the task which Jemmy had proposed to execute; every tug brought out his utmost strength, and when he failed in pulling down the bailiff, he compensated himself for his want of success, by cuffing his ribs, and peeling his shins by hard kicks; whilst from those open points which the driver's grapple with his man naturally exposed, were inflicted on him by the rejoicing urchins, numberless punches of tongs, potato-washers, and sticks whose points were from time to time hastily thrust into the coals, that they might more effectually either blind or disable him in some other manner.

As one of the little ones ran out to fill his jug, he spied his mother and Owen approaching, on which, with the empty vessel in his hand, he flew towards them, his little features distorted by glee and ferocity, wildly mixed up together.

"Oh mudher, mudher—ha, ha, ha!—don't come in yet; don't come in, Owen, till Jimmy, an' huz, an' the Denisses, gets the Bailie drownded. We 'll soon have the *bot** full; but Paddy an' Jack Denis have the eyes a'most pucked out of him; an' Katty 's takin' the rapin' hook from behind the *cuppel*, to get it about his neck."

Owen and the widow entered with all haste, precisely at the moment when Frank's head was dipped, for the first time, into the vessel.

"Is it goin' to murdher him ye are?" said Owen, as he seized Jemmy with a grasp that transferred him to the opposite end of the house; "hould back ye pack of young devils, an' let the man up. What did he come to do but his duty? I tell you, Jimmy, if you wor *at* yourself, an' in full strinth, that you 'd have the man's blood on you where you stand, and would suffer as you ought to do for it."

"There let me," replied the lad, his eyes glowing, and his veins swollen with passion; "I don't care if I did. It would be no sin, an' no disgrace, to hang for the like of him; dacenter to do that, than stale a creel of turf, or a wisp of straw, 'tanny rate."

In the meantime the bailiff had raised his head out of the water, and presented a visage which it was impossible to view with gravity. The

* Tub.

widow's anxiety prevented her from seeing it in a ludicrous light; but Owen's severe face assumed a grave smile, as the man shook himself, and attempted to comprehend the nature of his situation. The young urchins, who had fallen back at the appearance of Owen and the widow, now burst into a peal of mirth, in which, however, Jemmy, whose fiercer passions had been roused, did not join.

"Frank M'Murt," said the widow, "I take the mother of heaven to witness, that it vexes my heart to see you get sich thratement in my place; an' I wouldn't for the best cow I have that sich a *brieuliagh** happened. *Dher charp agus manim*,† Jimmy, but I 'll make you suffer for drawin' down this upon my head, and me had enough over it afore."

"I don't care," replied Jemmy; "whoever comes to take our property from us, an' us willin' to work, will suffer for it. Do you think I 'd see thim crathurs at their dhry phatie, an' our cows standin' in a pound for no rason? No; high hangin' to me, but I 'll split to the scull the first man that takes them; an' all I 'm sorry for is, that it 's not the vagabone Landlord himself that 's near me. That 's our thanks for payin' many a good pound, in honesty an' dacency, to him an' his; lavin' us to a schamin' Agent, an' not even to that same, but to his undher-strappers, that 's robbin' us on both sides between them. May hard fortune attind him, for a landlord! You may tell him this, Frank,—that his wisest plan is to keep clear of the counthry. Sure, it 's a gambler he is, they say; an' we must be harrished an' racked to support his villany! But wait a bit; maybe there 's a good time comin', when we 'll pay our money to thim that won't be too proud to hear our complaints wid their own ears, an' who won't turn us over to a divil's limb of an Agent. *He* had need, any how, to get his coffin sooner nor he thinks. What signifies hangin' in a good cause?" said he, as the tears of keen indignation burst from his glowing eyes. "It 's a dacent death, an' a happy death, when it 's for the right," he added—for his mind was evidently fixed upon the contemplation of those means of redress, which the habits of the country, and the prejudices of the people, present to them in the first moments of passion.

"It 's well that Frank 's one of ourselves," replied Owen, coolly, "otherwise, Jemmy, you said words that would lay you up by the heels. As for you, Frank, you must look over this. The boy 's the son of dacent poor parents, an' it 's a new thing for him to see the cows druv from the place. The poor fellow 's vexed, too, that he has been so long laid up wid a sore back; an' so you see one thing or another has put him through other. Jimmy is warm-hearted afther all, an' will be sorry for it when he cools, an' remimbers that *you* wor only doin' your duty."

"But what am I to do about the cows? Sure, I can't go back widout either thim or the rint?" said Frank, with a look of fear and trembling at Jemmy.

"The cows!" said another of the widow's sons who then came in; "why, you dirty spalpeen of a rip, you may whistle on the wrong side o' your mouth for them. I *druv* them off of the estate; an' now take them, if you dar! It 's conthrairy to law," said the urchin; "an' if you 'd

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* Brieuliagh—squabble. † By my soul and body.

touch them, I 'd make my mudher sarve you wid a *lattitat*, or a *fiery-flashes.*"

This was a triumph to the youngsters, who began to shake their little fists at him, and to exclaim in a chorus—" Ha, you dirty rip! wait till we get you out o' the house, an' if we don't put you from ever drivin'! Why, but you work like another?—ha, you 'll get it!"—and every little fist was shook in vengeance at him.

" Whisht wid ye," said Jemmy to the little ones: " let him alone, he got enough. There 's the cows for you; an' keen may the curse o' the widow an' orphans light upon you, and upon them that sent you, from first to last!—an' that 's the *best* we wish you!"

" Frank," said Owen to the bailiff, " is there any one in the town below that will take the rint, an' give a resate for it? Do you think, man, that the neighbours of an honest, industrious woman 'ud see the cattle taken out of her byre for a thrifle? Hut tut! no man alive—no sich thing! There 's not a man in the parish, wid manes to do it, would see them taken away to be canted, at only about a fourth part of their value. Hut, tut,—no!"

As the sterling fellow spoke, the cheeks of the widow were suffused with tears, and her son Jemmy's hollow eyes once more kindled, but with a far different expression from that which but a few minutes before flashed from them.

" Owen," said he, and utterance nearly failed him: " Owen, if *I* was well, it wouldn't be as it is wid us; but—no, indeed, it would not: but —may God bless you for this! Owen, never fear but you 'll be paid; may God bless you, Owen!"

As he spoke the hand of his humble benefactor was warmly grasped in his. A tear fell upon it: for with one of those quick and fervid transitions of feeling so peculiar to the people, he now felt a strong, generous emotion of gratitude, mingled, perhaps, with a sense of wounded pride, on finding the poverty of their little family so openly exposed.

" Hut, tut, Jimmy, avick," said Owen, who understood his feelings; " phoo, man alive! hut—hem!—why, sure, it 's nothin' at all, at all; anybody would do it—only a bare five-an'-twenty shillins, [it was five pound]:—any neighbour—Mick Cassidy, Jack Moran, or Pether M'Cullagh, would do it.—Come, Frank, step out; the money 's to the fore. Rosha, put your cloak about you, and let us go down to the Agint, or clerk, or whatsomever he is—sure, that makes no maxim anyhow;—I suppose he has power to give a resate. Jemmy, go to bed again, you 're pale, poor bouchal; and, childhre, ye crathurs ye, the cows won't be taken from ye this bout.—Come, in the name of God, let us go, and see everything rightified at once—hut, tut—come."

Many similar details of Owen M'Carthy's useful life could be given, in which he bore an equally benevolent and Christian part. Poor fellow! he was, ere long, brought low; but, to the credit of our peasantry, much as is said about their barbarity, he was treated, when helpless, with gratitude, pity, and kindness.

Until the peace of 1814, Owen's regular and systematic industry enabled him to struggle successfully against a weighty rent and sudden depres-

sion in the price of agricultural produce; that is, he was able, by the unremitting toil of a man remarkable alike for an unbending spirit and a vigorous frame of body, to pay his rent with tolerable regularity. It is true, a change began to be visible in his personal appearance, in his farm, in the dress of his children, and in the economy of his household. Improvements, which adequate capital would have enabled him to effect, were left either altogether unattempted, or in an imperfect state, resembling neglect, though, in reality, the result of poverty. His dress at mass, and in fairs and markets, had, by degrees, lost that air of comfort and warmth which bespeak the independent farmer. The evidences of embarrassment began to disclose themselves in many small points—inconsiderable, it is true, but not the less significant. His house, in the progress of his declining circumstances, ceased to be annually ornamented by a new coat of whitewash; it soon assumed a faded and yellowish hue, and sparkled not in the setting sun as in the days of Owen's prosperity. It had, in fact, a wasted, unthriving look, like its master. The thatch became black and rotten upon its roof; the chimneys sloped to opposite points; the windows were less neat, and, ultimately, when broken, were patched with a couple of leaves from the children's blotted copy-books. His out-houses also began to fail. The neatness of his little farm-yard, and the cleanliness which marked so conspicuously the space fronting his dwelling-house, disappeared in the course of time. Filth began to accumulate where no filth had been; his garden was not now planted so early, nor with such taste and neatness as before; his crops were later, and less abundant; his haggarts neither so full nor so trim as they were wont to be, nor his ditches and enclosures kept in such good repair. His cars, ploughs, and other farming implements, instead of being put under cover, were left exposed to the influence of wind and weather, where they soon became crazy and useless.

Such, however, were only the slighter symptoms of his bootless struggle against the general embarrassment into which the agricultural interests were, year after year, so unhappily sinking.

Had the tendency to general distress among the class to which he belonged become stationary, Owen would have continued by toil and incessant exertion to maintain his ground; but, unfortunately, there was no point at which the national depression could then stop. Year after year produced deeper, more extensive, and more complicated misery; and when he hoped that every succeeding season would bring an improvement in the market, he was destined to experience not merely a fresh disappointment, but an unexpected depreciation in the price of his corn, butter, and other disposable commodities.

When a nation is reduced to such a state, no eye but that of God himself can see the appalling wretchedness to which a year of disease and scarcity strikes down the poor and working classes.

Owen, after a long and noble contest for nearly three years, sank, at length, under the united calamities of disease and scarcity. The father of the family was laid low upon the bed of sickness, and those of his little ones who escaped it were almost consumed by famine. This two-fold shock sealed his ruin; his honest heart was crushed—his hardy frame shorn of its strength, and he to whom every neighbour fled as to a friend,

now required friendship at a moment when the wide-spread poverty of the country rendered its assistance hopeless.

On rising from his bed of sickness, the prospect before him required his utmost fortitude to bear. He was now wasted in energy both of mind and body, reduced to utter poverty, with a large family of children, too young to assist him, without means of retrieving his circumstances, his wife and himself gaunt skeletons, his farm neglected, his house wrecked, and his offices falling to ruin, yet every day bringing the half-year's term nearer! Oh, ye who riot on the miseries of such men—ye who roll round the easy circle of fashionable life, think upon this picture! Ye vile and heartless landlords, who see not, hear not, know not those to whose heart-breaking toil ye owe the only merit ye possess—that of rank in society—come and contemplate this virtuous man, as unfriended, unassisted, and uncheered by those who are bound by a strong moral duty to protect and aid him, he looks shuddering into the dark cheerless future! Is it to be wondered at that he, and such as he, should, in the misery of his despair, join the nightly meetings, be lured to associate himself with the incendiary, or seduced to grasp, in the stupid apathy of wretchedness, the weapon of the murderer? By neglecting the people, by draining them, with merciless rapacity, of the means of life; by goading them on under a cruel system of rack rents, ye become not their natural benefactors, but curses and scourges, nearly as much in reality as ye are in their opinion.

When Owen rose, he was driven by hunger, direct and immediate, to sell his best cow; and having purchased some oatmeal at an enormous price, from a well-known devotee in the parish, who hoarded up this commodity for a "dear summer," he laid his plans for the future, with as much judgment as any man could display. One morning after breakfast he addressed his wife as follows:

"Kathleen, mavourneen, I want to consult wid you about what we ought to do; things are low wid us, asthore; and except our heavenly Father puts it into the heart of them I 'm goin' to mention, I don't know what we 'll do, nor what 'll become of these poor crathurs that 's naked and hungry about us. God pity them, they don't know—and maybe that same 's some comfort—the hardships that 's before them. Poor crathurs! see how quiet and sorrowful they sit about their little play, passin' the time for themselves as well as they can! Alley, acushla machree, come over to me. Your hair is bright and fair, Alley, and curls so purtily that the finest lady in the land might envy it; but, acushla, your colour 's gone, your little hands are wasted away, too; that sickness was hard and sore upon you, *a colleen machree*,* and he that 'ud spend his heart's blood for you, darlin', can do nothin' to help you!"

He looked at the child as he spoke, and a slight motion in the muscles of his face was barely perceptible, but it passed away; and, after kissing her, he proceeded:—

"Ay, ye crathurs—you and I, Kathleen, could earn our bread for our-

* Girl of my heart.

selves yet, but these can't do it. This last stroke, darlin', has laid us at the door of both poverty and sickness, but blessed be the mother of heaven for it, they are all left wid us; and sure that 's a blessin' we 've to be thankful for—glory be to God!"

"Ay, poor things, it 's well to have them spared, Owen dear; sure I 'd rather a thousand times beg from door to door, and have my childher to look at, than be in comfort widout them."

"Beg: that 'ud go hard wid me, Kathleen. I 'd work—I 'd live on next to nothing all the year round; but to see the crathurs that wor dacently bred up brought to *that*, I couldn't bear it, Kathleen—'twould break the heart widin in me. Poor as they are, they have the blood of kings in their veins; and, besides, to see a M'Carthy beggin' his bread in the counthry where his name was once great—The M'Carthy More, that was their title—no, acushla; I love them as I do the blood in my own veins; but I'd rather see them in the arms of God in heaven, laid down dacently, with their little sorrowful faces washed, and their little bodies stretched out purtily before my eyes—I would—in the grave-yard there beyant, where all belonging to me lie, than have it cast up to them, or have it said, that ever a M'Carthy was seen beggin' on the highway."

"But, Owen, can you strike out no plan for us that 'ud put us in the way of comin' round agin? These poor ones, if we could hould out for two or three year, would soon be able to help us."

"They would—they would. I 'm thinkin' this day or two of a plan: but I'm doubtful whether it 'ud come to anything."

"What is it, acushla? Sure we can't be worse nor we are, any way."

"I 'm goin' to go to Dublin. I 'm tould that the landlord 's come home from France, and that he 's there now; and if I didn't see him, sure I could see the agent. Now, Kathleen, my intintion 'ud be to lay our case before the head landlord himself, in hopes he might hould back his hand, and spare us for a while. If I had a line from the agent, or a scrape of a pen, that I could show at home to some of the nabours, who knows but I could borry what 'ud set us up agin! I think many of them 'ud be sorry to see me turned out; eh, Kathleen?"

The Irish are an imaginative people; indeed too much so, for either their individual or national happiness. And it is this and superstition, which also depends much upon imagination, that makes them so easily influenced by those extravagant dreams that are held out to them by persons who understand their character.

When Kathleen heard the plan on which Owen founded his expectations of assistance, her dark melancholy eye flashed with a portion of its former fire; a transient vivacity lit up her sickly features, and she turned a smile of hope and affection upon her children, then upon Owen.

"Arrah, thin, who knows, indeed!—who knows but he might do something for us? And maybe we might be as well as ever yet! May the Lord put it into his heart, this day! I declare, ay!—maybe it was God put it into *your* heart, Owen!"

"I 'll set off," replied her husband, who was a man of decision; "I 'll set off on other morrow mornin'; and as nobody knows anything about it, so let there not be a word said upon the subject, good or bad. If I

have success, well and good; but if not, why nobody need be the wiser."

The heart-broken wife evinced, for the remainder of the day, a lightness of spirits which she had not felt for many a month before. Even Owen was less depressed than usual, and employed himself in making such arrangements as he knew would occasion his family to feel the inconvenience of his absence less acutely. But as the hour of his departure drew nigh, a sorrowful feeling of affection rising into greater strength and tenderness threw a melancholy gloom around his hearth. According to their simple view of distance, a journey to Dublin was a serious undertaking, and to them it was such. Owen was in weak health, just risen out of illness, and what was more trying than any other consideration was, that since their marriage they had never been separated before.

On the morning of his departure, he was up before daybreak, and so were his wife and children, for the latter had heard the conversation already detailed between them, and, with their simple-minded parents, enjoyed the gleam of hope which it presented; but this soon changed—when he was preparing to go, an indefinite sense of fear, and a more vivid clinging of affection marked their feelings. He himself partook of this, and was silent, depressed, and less ardent than when the speculation first presented itself to his mind. His resolution, however, was taken, and should he fail, no blame at a future time could be attached to himself. It was the last effort; and to neglect it, he thought, would have been to neglect his duty. When breakfast was ready, they all sat down in silence; the hour was yet early, and a rushlight was placed in a wooden candlestick that stood beside them to afford light. There was something solemn and touching in the group as they sat in dim relief, every face marked by the traces of sickness, want, sorrow, and affection. The father attempted to eat, but could not; Kathleen sat at the meal, but could taste nothing; the children ate, for hunger at the moment was predominant over every other sensation. At length it was over, and Owen rose to depart; he stood for a minute on the floor, and seemed to take a survey of his cold, cheerless house, and then of his family; he cleared his throat several times, but did not speak.

"Kathleen," said he, at length, "in the name of God I'll go; and may his blessin' be about you, asthore machree, and guard you and these darlins till I come back to yez."

Kathleen's faithful heart could bear no more; she laid herself on his bosom—clung to his neck, and, as the parting kiss was given, she wept aloud, and Owen's tears fell silently down his worn cheeks. The children crowded about them in loud wailings, and the grief of this virtuous and afflicted family was of that profound description, which is ever the companion, in such scenes, of pure and genuine love.

"Owen!" she exclaimed; "Owen, *a-suilish mahuil agus machree!* * I doubt we wor wrong in thinkin' of this journey. How can you, mavourneen, walk all the way to Dublin, and you so worn and weakly wid that sickness, and the bad feedin' both before and since? Och, give it up,

* Light of my eyes and of my heart.

achree, and stay wid us, let what will happen. You 're not able for sich a journey, indeed you 're not. Stay wid me and the childher, Owen; sure we 'd be so lonesome widout you—will you, agrah? and the Lord will do for us some other way, maybe."

Owen pressed his faithful wife to his heart, and kissed her chaste lips with a tenderness which the heartless votaries of fashionable life can never know.

"Kathleen, asthore," he replied, in those terms of endearment which flow so tenderly through the language of the people; "sure whin I remimber your fair young face—your yellow hair, and the light that was in your eyes, acushla machree—but that 's gone long ago—och, don't ax me to stop. Isn't your lightsome laugh, whin you wor young, in my ears? and your step that 'ud not bend the flower of the field—Kathleen, I can't, indeed I can't, bear to think of what you wor, nor of what you are now, when in the coorse of age and natur, but a small change ought to be upon you! Sure I ought to make every struggle to take you and these sorrowful crathurs out of the state you 're in."

The children flocked about them, and joined their entreaties to those of their mother. "Father, don't lave us—we 'll be lonesome if you go; and if my mother 'ud get unwell, who 'd be to take care of her? Father, don't lave your own 'weeny crathurs,' (a pet name he had for them)—maybe the meal 'ud be eat out before you'd come back; or maybe something 'ud happen you in that strange place."

"Indeed, there 's truth in what they say, Owen," said the wife; "do be said by your own Kathleen for this time, and don't take sich a long journey upon you. Afther all, maybe, you wouldn't see him—sure the nabours will help us, if you could only humble yourself to ax them!"

"Kathleen," said Owen, "when this is past you 'll be glad I went—indeed you will; sure it 's only the tindher feelin' of your hearts, darlins. Who knows what the landlord may do when I see himself, and show him these resates—every penny paid him by our own family. Let me go, acushla; it *does* cut me to the heart to lave yez the way yez are in, even for a while; but it 's far worse to see your poor wasted faces, widout havin' it in my power to do anything for yez."

He then kissed them again, one by one; and pressing the affectionate partner of his sorrows to his breaking heart, he bade God bless them, and set out in the twilight of a bitter March morning. He had not gone many yards from the door when little Alley ran after him in tears; he felt her hand upon the skirts of his coat, which she plucked with a smile of affection that neither tears nor sorrow could repress. "Father, kiss *me* again," said she. He stooped down and kissed her tenderly. The child then ascended a green ditch, and Owen, as he looked back, saw her standing upon it; her fair tresses were tossed by the blast about her face, as with straining eyes she watched him receding from her view. Kathleen and the other children stood at the door, and also with deep sorrow watched his form, until the angle of the bridle-road rendered him no longer visible; after which they returned slowly to the fire and wept bitterly.

We believe no men are capable of bearing greater toil or privation than the Irish. Owen's *viaticum* was only two or three oaten cakes tied in a little handkerchief, and a few shillings in silver to pay for his bed. With this small stock of food and money, an oaken stick in his hand, and his wife's kerchief tied about his waist, he undertook a journey of one hundred and ten miles, in quest of a landlord who, so far from being acquainted with the distresses of his tenantry, scarcely knew even their names, and not of them in person.

Our scene now changes to the metropolis.

One evening, about half past six o'clock, a toil-worn man turned his steps to a splendid mansion in Mountjoy Square; his appearance was drooping, fatigued, and feeble. As he went along, he examined the numbers on the respective doors, until he reached a certain *one*—before which he stopped for a moment; he then stepped out upon the street, and looked through the windows, as if willing to ascertain whether there was any chance of his object being attained. Whilst in this situation a carriage rolled rapidly up, and stopped with a sudden check that nearly threw back the horses on their haunches. In an instant the thundering knock of the servant intimated the arrival of some person of rank; the hall door was opened, and Owen, availing himself of that opportunity, entered the hall. Such a visitor, however, was too remarkable to escape notice. The hand of the menial was rudely placed against his breast; and, as the usual impertinent interrogatories were put to him, the pampered ruffian kept pushing him back, until the afflicted man stood upon the upper step leading to the door.

"For the sake of God, let me spake but two words to him. I 'm his tenant; and I know he 's too much of a jintleman to turn away a man that has lived upon his honor's estate, father and son, for upwards of three hundre years. My name 's Owen——"

"You can't see him, my good fellow, at this hour. Go to Mr. M——, his Agent: we have company to dinner. He never speaks to a tenant on business; his Agent manages all that. Please, leave the way, here 's more company."

As he uttered the last word, he pushed Owen back; who, forgetting that the stairs were behind him, fell,—received a severe cut, and was so completely stunned, that he lay senseless and bleeding. Another carriage drove up, as the fellow, now much alarmed, attempted to raise him from the steps; and, by order of the gentleman who came in it, he was brought into the hall. The circumstance now made some noise. It was whispered about, that one of Mr. S——'s tenants, a drunken fellow from the country, wanted to break in forcibly to see him; but then it was also asserted, that his scull was broken, and that he lay dead in the hall. Several of the gentlemen above stairs, on hearing that a man had been killed, immediately assembled about him, and, by the means of restoratives, he soon recovered, though the blood streamed copiously from the wound in the back of his head.

"Who are you, my good man?" said Mr. S——

Owen looked about him rather vacantly; but soon collected himself, and replied in a mournful and touching tone of voice—"I 'm one of your

honor's tenants from Tubber Derg; my name is Owen M'Carthy, your honor—that is, if you be Mr. S——"

"And, pray, what brought you to town, M'Carthy?"

"I wanted to make an humble appale to your honor's feelins, in regard of my bit of farm. I, and my poor family, your honor, have been broken down by hard times and the sickness of the sason—God knows how *they* are."

"If you wish to speak to me about that, my good man, you must know I refer all these matters to my Agent. Go to him—he knows them best; and whatever is right and proper to be done for you, he will do it. Sinclair, give him a crown, and send him to the —— Dispensary, to get his head dressed. I say, Carthy, go to my Agent; he knows whether your claim is just or not, and will attend to it accordingly."

"Plase your honor, I've been wid him, and he says he can do nothin' whatsomever for me. I went two or three times, and couldn't see him, he was so busy; and, when I did get a word or two wid him, he tould me there was more offered for my land than I 'm payin'; and that if I did not pay up, I must be put out, God help me!"

"But I tell you, Carthy, I never interfere between him and my tenants."

"Och, indeed! and it would be well both for your honor's tenants and yourself, if you did, Sir. Your honor ought to know, Sir, more about us, and how we 're thrated. I 'm an honest man, Sir, and I tell you so for your good."

"And pray, Sir," said the Agent, stepping forward, for he had arrived a few minutes before, and heard the last observation of M'Carthy—"pray how are they treated, you that know so well, and are so honest a man?—As for honesty, you might have referred to me for that, I think," he added.

"Mr. M——," said Owen, "we 're thrated very badly. Sir, you needn't look at me, for I 'm not afeerd to spake the thruth; no bullyin', Sir, will make me say anything in your favour that you don't desarve. You 've broken the half of them by severity; you 've turned the tenants aginst yourself and his honor here; and I tell you now, though you 're to the fore, that, in the coorse of a short time, there 'll be bad work upon the estate, except his honor, here, looks into his own affairs, and hears the complaints of the people. Look at these resates, yer honor; they 'll show you, Sir,——"

"Carthy, I can hear no such language against the gentleman to whom I entrust the management of my property; of course, I refer the matter solely to him. I can do nothing in it."

"Kathleen, avourneen!" exclaimed the poor man, as he looked up despairingly to heaven; "and ye, poor darlins of my heart! is this the news I 'm to have for yez whin I go home?—As you hope for mercy, Sir, don't turn away your ear from my petition, that I 'd humbly make to *yourself*. Cowld, and hunger, and hardship, are at home before me, yer honor. If you 'd be plased to look at these resates, you 'd see that I always paid my rint; and 'twas sickness and the hard times——"

"And your own honesty, industry, and good conduct," said the Agent, giving a dark and malignant sneer at him. "Carthy, it shall be my business to see that you do not spread a bad spirit through the tenantry

much longer.—Sir, you have heard the fellow's admission. It is an implied threat that he will give us much serious trouble. There is not such another incendiary on your property—not one, upon my honour."

"Sir," said a servant, "dinner is on the table."

"Sinclair," said his landlord, "give him another crown, and tell him to trouble me no more." Saying which, he and the Agent went up to the drawing-room, and, in a moment, Owen saw a large party sweep down stairs, full of glee and vivacity, by whom both himself and his distresses were as completely forgotten as if they had never existed.

He now slowly departed, and knew not whether the house-steward had given him money or not until he felt it in his hand. A cold, sorrowful weight lay upon his heart; the din of the town deadened his affliction into a stupor; but an overwhelming sense of his disappointment, and a conviction of the Agent's diabolical falsehood, entered like barbed arrows into his heart.

On leaving the steps, he looked up to heaven in the distraction of his agonising thoughts; the clouds were black and lowering—the wind stormy—and, as it carried them on its dark wing along the sky, he wished, if it were the will of God, that his head lay in the quiet grave-yard where the ashes of his forefathers reposed in peace. But he again remembered his Kathleen and their children; and the large tears of anguish, deep and bitter, rolled slowly down his cheeks.

We will not trace him into an hospital, whither the wound on his head occasioned him to be sent, but simply state, that, on the second week after this, a man, with his head bound in a handkerchief, lame, bent, and evidently labouring under severe illness or great affliction, might be seen toiling slowly up the little hill that commanded a view of Tubber Derg. On reaching the top he sat down to rest for a few minutes, but his eye was eagerly turned to the house which contained all that was dear to him on this earth. The sun was setting, and shone, with half his disk visible, in that dim and cheerless splendour which produces almost in every temperament a feeling of melancholy. His house which, in happier days, formed so beautiful and conspicuous an object in the view, was now, from the darkness of its walls, scarcely discernible. The position of the sun, too, rendered it more difficult to be seen; and Owen, for it was he, shaded his eyes with his hand, to survey it more distinctly. Many a harrowing thought and remembrance passed through his mind, as his eye traced its dim outline in the fading light. He had done his duty—he had gone to the fountain-head, with a hope that his simple story of affliction might be heard; but all was fruitless: the only gleam of hope that opened upon their misery had now passed into darkness and despair for ever. He pressed his aching forehead with distraction as he thought of this; then clasped his hands bitterly, and groaned aloud.

At length he rose, and proceeded with great difficulty, for the short rest had stiffened his weak and fatigued joints. As he approached home his heart sank; and as he ascended the blood-red stream which covered the bridle-way that led to his house, what with fatigue and affliction, his agitation weakened him so much that he stopped, and leaned on his staff several times, that he might take breath.

"It 's too dark maybe for them to see me, or poor Kathleen would send the darlins to give me the *she dha veha.** Kathleen, avourneen machree! how my heart beats wid longin' to see you, asthore, and to see the weeny crathurs—glory be to Him that has left *them* to me—praise and glory to His name!"

He was now within a few perches of the door; but a sudden misgiving shot across his heart when he saw it shut, and no appearance of smoke from the chimney, nor of stir or life about the house. He advanced—

"Mother of glory, what's this!—But, wait, let me rap agin. Kathleen, Kathleen!—are you widin, avourneen? Owen—Alley—arn't ye widin, childhre? Alley, sure I 'm come back to you all!" and he rapped more loudly than before. A dark breeze swept through the bushes as he spoke, but no voice nor sound proceeded from the house;—all was still as death within. "Alley!" he called once more to his little favourite; "I 'm come home wid something for *you*, asthore! I didn't forget *you*, alanna!—I brought it from Dublin all the way. Alley!" but the gloomy murmur of the blast was the only reply.

Perhaps the most intense of all that he knew as misery was that which he then felt; but this state of suspense was soon terminated by the appearance of a neighbour who was passing.

"Why, thin, Owen, but yer welcome home agin, my poor fellow; and I 'm sorry that I haven't betther news for you, and so are all of us."

He whom he addressed had almost lost the power of speech:—

"Frank," said he, and he wrung his hand. "What—what? was death among them? For the sake of heaven, spake!"

The severe pressure which he received in return ran like a shock of paralysis to his heart. "Owen, you must be a man; every one pities yez, and may the Almighty pity and support yez! She is, indeed, Owen, gone; the weeny fair-haired child, your favourite Alley, is gone. Yestherday she was berrid; and dacently the nabours attinded the place, and sent in, as far as they had it, both mate and dhrink to Kathleen and the other ones. Now, Owen, you 've heard it; trust in God, an' be a man."

A deep and convulsive throe shook him to the heart. "Gone!—the fair-haired one!—Alley!—Alley!—the pride of both our hearts; the sweet, the quiet, and the sorrowful child, that seldom played wid the rest, but kept wid mys——! Oh, my darlin', my darlin'! gone from my eyes for ever!—God of glory; won't you support me this night of sorrow and misery!" With a sudden yet profound sense of humility, he dropped on his knees at the threshold, and, as the tears rolled down his convulsed cheeks, exclaimed, in a burst of sublime piety, not at all uncommon among our peasantry—"I thank you, O my God! I thank you, an' I put myself an' my weeny ones, my *pastchee boght*,† into your hands. I thank you, O God, for what has happened! Keep me up and support me—och, I want it! You loved the weeny one, and you took her; she was the light of my eyes, and the pulse of my broken heart, but you took her, blessed Father of heaven! an' we can't be angry wid you for so doin'! Still if you had spared *her*—if—if—O, blessed Father, my heart was *in* the *very*

* The welcome. † My poor children.

one you took—but I thank you, O God? May she rest in pace, now and for ever, Amin!"

He then rose up, and slowly wiping the tears from his eyes, departed.

"Let me hould your arm, Frank, dear," said he, "I 'm weak and tired wid a long journey. Och, an' can it be that she 's gone—the fair-haired colleen! When I was lavin' home, an' had kissed them all—'twas the first time we ever parted, Kathleen and I, since our marriage—the blessed child came over an' held up her mouth, sayin', 'Kiss *me* agin, father;' an' this was afther herself an' all of them had kissed me afore. But, och! oh! blessed Mother! Frank, where 's my Kathleen and the rest?—and why are they out of their own poor place?"

"Owen, I tould you a while agone, that you must be a man. I gave you the worst news first, an' what 's to come doesn't signify much. It was too dear; for if any man could live upon it you could:—you have neither house nor home, Owen, nor land. An ordher came from the Agint; your last cow was taken, so was all you had in the world—hem—barrin' a thrifle. No,—bad manners to it! no,—you 're not widout *a home*, anyway. The family 's in my barn, brave and comfortable, compared to what your own house was, that let in the wather through the roof like a sieve; and, while the same barn 's to the fore, never say you want a home."

"God bless you, Frank, for that goodness to them and me; if you 're not rewarded for it here, you will in a betther place. Och, I long to see Kathleen and the childher! But I 'm fairly broken down, Frank, and hardly able to mark the ground; and, indeed, no wondher, if you knew but all: still, let God's will be done! Poor Kathleen, I must bear up afore her, or she 'll break her heart; for I know how she loved the goolden-haired darlin' that 's gone from us. Och, and how did she go, Frank, for I left her betther?"

"Why, the poor girsha took a relapse, and wasn't strong enough to bear up aginst the last attack; but it 's one comfort that you know she 's happy."

Owen stood for a moment, and, looking solemnly in his neighbour's face, exclaimed, in a deep and exhausted voice, "Frank!"

"What are you goin' to say, Owen?"

"The heart widin in me 's broke—broke!"

The large tears rolled down his weather-beaten cheeks, and he proceeded in silence to the house of his friend. There was, however, a feeling of sorrow in his words and manner which Frank could not withstand. He grasped Owen's hand, and, in a low and broken voice, simply said—"Keep your spirits up—keep them up."

When they came to the barn in which his helpless family had taken up their temporary residence, Owen stood for a moment to collect himself; but he was nervous, and trembled with repressed emotion. They then entered; and Kathleen, on seeing her beloved and affectionate husband, threw herself on his bosom, and for some time felt neither joy nor sorrow—she had swooned. The poor man embraced her with a tenderness at once mournful and deep. The children, on seeing their father safely returned, forgot their recent grief, and clung about him with gladness and

delight. In the mean time Kathleen recovered, and Owen for many minutes could not check the loud and clamorous grief, now revived by the presence of her husband, with which the heart-broken and emaciated mother deplored her departed child; and Owen himself, on once more looking among the little ones, on seeing her little frock hanging up, and her stool vacant by the fire—on missing her voice and her blue laughing eyes—and remembering the affectionate manner in which, as with a presentiment of death, she held up her little mouth and offered him the last kiss—he slowly pulled the toys and cakes he had purchased for her out of his pocket, surveyed them for a moment, and then, putting his hands on his face, bent his head upon his bosom, and wept with the vehement outpouring of a father's sorrow.

The reader perceives that he was a meek man; that his passions were not dark nor violent; he bore no revenge to those who neglected or injured him, and in this he differed from too many of his countrymen. No; his spirit was broken down with sorrow, and had not room for the fiercer and more destructive passions. His case excited general pity. Whatever his neighbours could do to soothe him and alleviate his affliction was done. His farm was not taken; for fearful threats were held out against those who might venture to occupy it. In these threats he had nothing to do; on the contrary, he strongly deprecated them. Their existence, however, was deemed by the Agent sufficient to justify him in his callous and malignant severity towards him.

We did not write this story for effect. Our object was to relate facts that occurred. In Ireland, there is much blame justly attached to landlords, for their neglect and severity, in such depressed times, towards their tenants: there is also much that is not only indefensible but atrocious on the part of the tenants. But can the landed proprietors of Ireland plead ignorance or want of education for their neglect and rapacity, whilst the crimes of the tenants, on the contrary, may in general be ascribed to both? He who lives—as, perhaps, his forefathers have done—upon any man's property, and fails from unavoidable calamity, has as just and clear a right to assistance from the landlord as if the amount of that aid were a bonded debt. Common policy, common sense, and common justice, should induce the Irish landlords to lower their rents according to the market for agricultural produce, otherwise poverty, famine, crime, and vague political speculations, founded upon idle hopes of a general transfer of property, will spread over and convulse the kingdom. Any man who looks into our poverty, may see that our landlords ought to reduce their rents to a standard suitable to the times, and to the ability of the tenant.

But to return. Owen, for another year, struggled on for his family, without success; his firm spirit *was* broken; employment he could not get, and even had it been regular, he would have found it impracticable to support his helpless wife and children by his labour. The next year unhappily was also one of sickness and of want; the country was not only a wide waste of poverty, but overspread with typhus fever. One Saturday night he and the family found themselves without food; they had not tasted a morsel for twenty-four hours. There were murmurings and tears, and finally, a low conversation among them, as if they held a

conference upon some subject which filled them with both grief and satisfaction. In this alternation of feeling did they pass the time until the sharp gnawing of hunger was relieved by sleep. A keen December wind blew with a bitter blast on the following morning; the rain was borne along upon it with violence, and the cold was chill and piercing. Owen, his wife, and their six children, issued at day-break out of the barn in which, ever since their removal from Tubber Derg, they had lived until then; their miserable fragments of bed-clothes were tied in a bundle to keep them dry; their pace was slow, need we say sorrowful; all were in tears. Owen and Kathleen went first, with a child upon the back, and another in the hand, of each. Their route lay by their former dwelling, the door of which was open, for it had not been inhabited. On passing it they stood a moment; then with a simultaneous impulse both approached —entered—and took one last look of a spot to which their hearts clung with enduring attachment. They then returned; and as they passed, Owen put forth his hand, picked a few small pebbles out of the wall, and put them in his pocket.

"Farewell!" said he, "and may the blessin' of God rest upon you! We now lave you for ever! We 're goin' at last to beg our bread through the world wide, where none will know of the happy days we passed widin your walls! We *must* lave you; but glory be to the Almighty, we are goin' wid a clear conscience; we took no revenge into our own hands, but left everything to God above us. We are poor, but there is neither blood, nor murder, nor dishonesty upon our heads. Don't cry, Kathleen—don't cry, childher; there is still a good God above, who can and may do something for us *yet*, glory be to his holy name!"

He then passed on with his family, which, including himself, made, in all, eight paupers, being an additional burden upon the country, which might easily have been avoided. His land was about two years waste, and when it was ultimately taken, the house was a ruin, and the money allowed by the landlord for building a new one, together with the loss of two years' rent, would, if humanely directed, have enabled Owen M'Carthy to remain a solvent tenant.

When an Irish peasant is reduced to pauperism, he seldom commences the melancholy task of soliciting alms in his native place. The trial is always a severe one, and he is anxious to hide his shame and misery from the eyes of those who know him. This is one reason why some system of poor laws should be introduced into the country. Paupers of this description become a burden upon strangers, whilst those who are capable of entering with friendly sympathy into their misfortunes have no opportunity of assisting them. Indeed this shame of seeking alms from those who have known the mendicant in better days, is a proof that the absence of poor laws takes away from the poorer classes one of the strongest incitements to industry; for instance, if every pauper in Ireland were confined to his own parish, and compelled to beg from his acquaintances, the sense of shame alone would, by stirring them up to greater industry, reduce the number of mendicants one half. There is a strong spirit of family pride in Ireland, which would be sufficient to make many poor, of

both sexes, exert themselves to the uttermost rather than cast a stain upon their name, or bring a blush to the face of their relations. But now it is not so; the mendicant sets out to beg, and in most instances commences his new mode of life in some distant part of the country, where his name and family are not known.

Indeed it is astonishing how any man can, for a moment, hesitate to form his opinion upon the subject of poor laws. The English and Scotch gentry know something about the middle and lower classes of their respective countries, and of course they have a fixed system of provision for the poor in each. The ignorance of the Irish gentry, upon almost every subject connected with the real good of the people, is only in keeping with their ignorance of the people themselves. It is to be feared, however, that their disinclination to introduce poor laws arises less from actual ignorance, than from an illiberal selfishness. The facts of the case are these:—In Ireland the whole support of the inconceivable multitude of paupers, who swarm like locusts over the surface of the country, rests upon the middle and lower classes, or rather upon the latter, for there is scarcely such a thing in this unhappy country as a middle class. In not one out of a thousand instances do the gentry contribute to the mendicant poor. In the first place, a vast proportion of our landlords are absentees, who squander upon their own pleasures or vices, in the theatres, saloons, or gaming-houses of France, or in the softer profligacies of Italy, that which ought to return in some shape to stand in the place of duties so shamefully neglected. These persons contribute nothing to the poor, except the various evils which their absence entails upon them.

On the other hand, the *resident* gentry never, in any case, assist a beggar, even in the remote parts of the country, where there are no Mendicity Institutions. Nor do the beggars ever think of applying to them. They know that his Honor's dogs would be slipped at them; or that the whip might be laid, perhaps, to the shoulders of a broken-hearted father, with his brood of helpless children wanting food; perhaps, upon the emaciated person of a miserable widow, who begs for her orphans, only because the hands that supported, and would have defended both her and them, are mouldered into dust.

Upon the middle and lower classes, therefore, comes *directly* the heavy burden of supporting the great mass of pauperism that presses upon Ireland. It is certain that the Irish landlords know this, and that they are reluctant to see any law enacted which might make the performance of their duties to the poor compulsory. This, indeed, is natural in men who have so inhumanly neglected them.

But what must the state of a country be where those who are on the way to pauperism themselves are exclusively burdened with the support of the vagrant poor? It is like putting additional weight on a man already sinking under the burden he bears. The landlords suppose, that because the maintenance of the idle who are able, and of the aged and infirm who are not able to work, comes upon the renters of land, they themselves are exempted from their support. This, if true, is as bitter a stigma upon their humanity as upon their sense of justice: but it is *not* true. Though the cost of supporting such an incredible number of the

idle and helpless does, in the first place, fall upon the tenant, yet, by diminishing his means, and by often compelling him to purchase, towards the end of the season, a portion of food equal to that which he has given away in charity, it certainly becomes ultimately a clear deduction from the landlord's rent. In either case it is a deduction, but in the latter it is often doubly so; inasmuch as the poor tenants must frequently pay, at the close of a season, double, perhaps treble, the price which provision brought at the beginning of it.

Any person conversant with the Irish people must frequently have heard such dialogues as the following, during the application of a beggar for alms:—

*Mendicant.*—"We're axin your charity, for God's sake!"

*Poor Tenant.*—"Why thin for His sake you would get it, poor crathur, if we had it; but it's not for you widin the four corners of the house. It 'ud be well for us if we had *now* all we gave away in charity *durin' the whole year;* we wouldn't have to be buyin' for ourselves at three prices. Why don't you go up to the Big House? *They're* rich and can afford it."

*Mendicant*, with a shrug, which sets all his coats and bags in motion—"Och! och! The Big House, inagh! Musha, do you want me, an' the childhre here, to be torn to pieces wid the dogs? or lashed wid a whip by one o' the sarvints? No, no, avourneen!" (with a hopeless shake of the head.) "That 'ud be a blue look-up, like a clear evenin'."

*Poor Tenant.*—"Then, indeed, we haven't it to help you, now, poor man. We're buyin' ourselves."

*Mendicant.*—"Thin, throth, that's lucky, so it is! I've as purty a grain o' male here, as you'd wish to thicken wather wid, that I sthruv to get together, in hopes to be able to buy a quarther o' tobaccy, along wid a pair o' new bades an' a scapular for myself. I'm suspicious that there's about a stone ov it altogether. You can have it anunder the market price, for I 'm frettin' at not havin' the scapular an me. Sure the Lord will sind me an' the childhre a bit an' sup some way else—glory to his name!—besides a lock o' praties in the corner o' the bag here, that 'll do us for this day, any way."

The bargain is immediately struck, and the poor tenant is glad to purchase, even from a beggar, his stone of meal, in consequence of getting it a few pence under market price. Such scenes as this, which are of frequent occurrence in the country parts of Ireland, need no comment.

This, certainly, is not a state of things which should be permitted to exist. Every man ought to be compelled to support the poor of his native parish according to his means. It is an indelible disgrace to the legislature so long to have neglected the paupers of Ireland. Is it to be thought of with common patience that a person rolling in wealth shall feed upon his turtle, his venison, and his costly luxuries of every description, for which he will not scruple to pay the highest price—that this heartless and selfish man, whether he reside at home or abroad, shall thus unconscionably pamper himself with viands purchased by the toil of the people, and yet not contribute to assist them, when poverty, sickness, or age, throws them upon the scanty support of casual charity!

Shall this man be permitted to batten in luxury in a foreign land, or, at home; to whip our paupers from his carriage; or hunt them, like beasts of prey, from his grounds, whilst the lower classes—the gradually decaying poor—are compelled to groan under the burden of their support in addition to their other burdens? Surely it is not a question which admits of argument. This subject has been darkened and made difficult by fine-spun and unintelligible theories, when the only knowledge necessary to understand it may be gained by spending a few weeks in some poor village in the interior of the country. As for Parliamentary Committees upon this or any other subject, they are, with reverence be it spoken, thoroughly contemptible. They will summon and examine witnesses who, for the most part, know little about the habits or distresses of the poor; public money will be wasted in defraying their expenses and in printing reports; resolutions will be passed; something will be said about it in the House of Commons; and, in a few weeks, after resolving and re-resolving, it is as little thought of, as if it had never been the subject of investigation. In the mean time the evil proceeds—becomes more inveterate—eats into the already declining prosperity of the country—whilst those who suffer under it have the consolation of knowing that a Parliamentary Committee sat longer upon it than so many geese upon their eggs, but hatched nothing. Two circumstances, connected with pauperism in Ireland, are worthy of notice. The first is this—the Roman Catholics, who certainly constitute the bulk of the population, feel themselves called upon, from the peculiar tenets of their religion, to exercise indiscriminate charity largely to the begging poor. They act under the impression that eleemosynary good works possess the power of cancelling sin to an extent almost incredible. Many of their religious legends are founded upon this view of the case; and the reader will find an appropriate one in the Priest's sermon, as given in our tale of the "Poor Scholar." That legend is one which the author has many a time heard from the lips of the people, by whom it was implicitly believed. A man who may have committed a murder overnight, will the next day endeavour to wipe away his guilt by alms given for the purpose of getting the benefit of "the poor man's prayer." The principle of assisting our distressed fellow-creatures, when rationally exercised, is one of the best in society; but here it becomes entangled with error, superstition, and even with crime—acts as a bounty upon imposture, and in some degree predisposes to guilt, from an erroneous belief that sin may be cancelled by alms and the prayers of mendicant impostors.

The second point, in connexion with pauperism, is the immoral influence that proceeds from the relation in which the begging poor in Ireland stand towards the class by whom they are supported. These, as we have already said, are the poorest, least educated, and consequently the most ignorant description of the people. They are, also, the most numerous. There have been for centuries, probably since the Reformation itself, certain opinions floating among the lower classes in Ireland, all tending to prepare them for some great change in their favour, arising from the discomfiture of heresy, the overthrow of their enemies, and the exaltation of themselves and their religion.

Enchanted Soldiers in the Bath.

Don Quixote, p. 387.

Scarcely had the public mind subsided after the Rebellion of Ninety-eight, when the success of Buonaparte directed the eyes and the hopes of the Irish people towards *him*, as the person designed to be their deliverer. Many a fine fiction has the author of this work heard about that great man's escapes, concerning the bullets that conveniently turned aside from his person, and the sabres that civilly declined to cut him down. Many prophecies too were related, in which the glory of this country under his reign was touched off in the happiest colours. Pastorini also gave such notions an impulse. Eighteen twenty-five was to be the year of their deliverance: George the Fourth was never to fill the British throne; and the mill of Lowth was to be turned three times with human blood. "The miller with the two thumbs was then living," said the mendicants, for they were the principal propagators of these opinions, and the great expounders of their own prophecies; so that of course there could be no further doubt upon the subject. Several of them had seen him, a red-haired man with broad shoulders, stout legs, exactly such as a miller ought to have, and two thumbs on his right hand; all precisely as the prophecy had stated. Then there was *Beal-derg*, and several others of the fierce old Milesian chiefs, who along with their armies lay in an enchanted sleep, all ready to awake and take a part in the delivery of the country. "Sure such a man," and they would name one in the time of the mendicant's grandfather, "was once going to a fair to sell a horse—well and good; the time was the dawn of morning, a little before day-light: he met a man who undertook to purchase his horse; they agreed upon the price, and the seller of him followed the buyer into a Rath, where he found a range of horses, each with an armed soldier asleep by his side, ready to spring upon him if awoke. The purchaser cautioned the owner of the horse as they were about to enter the subterraneous dwelling, against touching either horse or man; but the countryman happening to stumble, inadvertently laid his hand upon a sleeping soldier, who immediately leaped up, drew his sword, and asked, '*Wuil anam inh?*' 'Is the time in it? Is the time arrived?' To which the horse-dealer of the Rath replied, '*Ha niel. Gho dhee collhow areesht.*' 'No: go to sleep again.' Upon this the soldier immediately sank down in his former position, and unbroken sleep reigned throughout the cave." The influence on the warm imaginations of an ignorant people, of such fictions concocted by vagrant mendicants, is very pernicious. They fill their minds with the most palpable absurdities, and, what is worse, with opinions, which, besides being injurious to those who receive them, in every instance insure for those who propagate them a cordial and kind reception.

These mendicants consequently pander, for their own selfish ends, to the prejudices of the ignorant, which they nourish and draw out in a manner that has in no slight degree been subversive of the peace of the country. Scarcely any political circumstance occurs which they do not immediately seize upon and twist to their own purposes, or in other words, to the opinions of those from whom they derive their support. When our present police first appeared in their uniforms and black belts, another prophecy, forsooth, was fulfilled. Immediately before the downfall of heresy, a body of "Black Militia" was to appear; the police, then,

are the black militia, and the people consider themselves another step nearer the consummation of their vague speculations.

In the year Ninety-eight, the Irish mendicants were active agents, clever spies, and expert messengers on the part of the people; and to this day they carry falsehood, and the materials of outrage in its worst shape, into the bosom of peaceable families, who would, otherwise, never become connected with a system which is calculated to bring ruin and destruction upon those who permit themselves to join it.

This evil, and it is no trifling one, would, by the introduction of poor-laws, be utterly abolished; the people would not only be more easily improved, but education, when received, would not be corrupted by the infusion into it of such ingredients as the above. In many other points of view, the confirmed and hackneyed mendicants of Ireland are a great evil to the morals of the people. We could easily detail them, but such not being our object at present, we will now dismiss the subject of poor-laws, and resume our narrative.

Far—far different from this description of impostors, were Owen M'Carthy and his family. Their misfortunes were not the consequences of negligence or misconduct on their own part. They struggled long but unavailingly against high rents and low markets; against neglect on the part of the landlord and his agent; against sickness, famine, and death. They had no alternative but to beg or starve. Owen was willing to work, but he could not procure employment: and provided he could, the miserable sum of sixpence a day, when food was scarce and dear, would not support him, his wife, and six little ones. He became a pauper, therefore, only to avoid starvation.

Heavy and black was his heart, to use the strong expression of the people, on the bitter morning when he set out to encounter the dismal task of seeking alms, in order to keep life in himself and his family. The plan was devised on the preceding night, but to no mortal, except his wife, was it communicated. The honest pride of a man whose mind was above committing a mean action, would not permit him to reveal what he considered the first stain that ever was known to rest upon the name of M'Carthy; he therefore sallied out under the beating of the storm, and proceeded, without caring much whither he went, until he got considerably beyond the bounds of his own parish.

In the meantime hunger pressed keenly upon him and them. The day had no appearance of clearing up; the heavy rain and sleet beat into their thin, worn garments, and the clamour of his children for food began to grow more and more importunate. They came to the shelter of a hedge, which inclosed on one side a remote and broken road, along which, in order to avoid the risk of being recognised, they had preferred travelling. Owen stood here for a few minutes to consult with his wife, as to where and when they should "make a beginning;" but on looking round, he found her in tears.

"Kathleen, asthore," said he, "I can't bid you not to cry; bear up, acushla machree; bear up: sure, as I said when we came out this mornin', there's a good God above us, that can still turn over the good lafe for us, if we put our hopes in him."

The first alms-begging.

"Owen," said his sinking wife, "it's not altogether bekase we're brought to this that I'm cryin'; no, indeed."

"Thin what ails you, Kathleen darlin'?"

The wife hesitated, and evaded the question for some time; but at length, upon his pressing her for an answer, with a fresh gush of sorrow, she replied,

"Owen, since you *must* know—och, may God pity us!—since you must know, it's wid hunger—*wid hunger!* I kept, unknownst, a little bit of bread to give the childhre this mornin', and that was part of it I gave you yesterday early—I'm near two days fastin'."

"Kathleen! Kathleen! Och! sure I know your worth, avillish. You were too good a wife, an' too good a mother, a'most! God forgive me, Kathleen! I fretted about beginnin', dear; but as my Heavenly Father 's above me, I'm now happier to beg wid you by my side, nor if I war in the best house in the province widout you! Hould up, avourneen, for a while. Come on, childhre, darlins, an' the first house we meet we'll ax their char——, their assistance. Come on, darlins, and all of yees. Why my heart 's asier, so it is. Sure we have your mother, childhre, safe wid us, an' what signifies anything so long as *she's* left to us?"

He then raised his wife tenderly, for she had been compelled to sit from weakness, and they bent their steps to a decent farm-house that stood a few perches off the road, about a quarter of a mile before them.

As they approached the door, the husband hesitated a moment; his face got paler than usual, and his lip quivered, as he said—"Kathleen—"

"I know what you're goin' to say, Owen. No, acushla, *you* won't; *I'll* ax it myself."

"Do," said Owen, with difficulty; "I can't do it; but I'll overcome my pride afore long, I hope. It's thryin' to me, Kathleen, an' you know it is—for you know how little I ever expected to be brought to this."

"Husht, avillish! We'll thry, then, in the name o' God."

As she spoke, the children, herself, and her husband entered, to beg, for the first time in their lives, a morsel of food. Yes! timidly—with a blush of shame, red even to crimson, upon the pallid features of Kathleen—with grief acute and piercing—they entered the house together.

For some minutes they stood and spoke not. The unhappy woman, unaccustomed to the language of supplication, scarcely knew in what terms to crave assistance. Owen himself stood back, uncovered, his fine, but much changed features, overcast with an expression of deep affliction. Kathleen cast a single glance at him, as if for encouragement. Their eyes met; she saw the upright man—the last remnant of the M'Carthy—himself once the friend of the poor, of the unhappy, of the afflicted—standing crushed and broken down by misfortunes which he had not deserved, waiting with patience for a morsel of charity. Owen, too, had *his* remembrances. He recollected the days when he sought and gained the pure and fond affections of his Kathleen: when beauty, and youth, and innocence encircled her with their light and their grace, as she spoke or moved; he saw her a happy wife and mother in her own home, kind and benevolent to all who required her good word or her good office, and remembered the sweetness of her light-hearted song; but now she was

homeless. He remembered, too, how she used to plead with himself for the afflicted. It was but a moment; yet when their eyes met, that moment was crowded by recollections that flashed across their minds with a keen sense of a lot so bitter and wretched as theirs. Kathleen could not speak, although she tried; her sobs denied her utterance; and Owen involuntarily sat upon a chair, and covered his face with his hand.

To an observing eye it is never difficult to detect the cant of imposture, or to perceive distress when it is real. The good woman of the house, as is usual in Ireland, was in the act of approaching them, unsolicited, with a double handful of meal—that is what the Scotch and northern Irish call a *gowpen*, or as much as both hands locked together can contain—when, noticing their distress, she paused a moment, eyed them more closely, and exclaimed—

"What's this? Why there's something wrong wid you, good people! But first an' foremost take this, in the name an' honour of God."

"May the blessin' of the same Man* rest upon yees!" replied Kathleen. "This is a sorrowful thrial to us; for it's our first day to be upon the world; an' this is the first help of the kind we ever axed for, or ever got; an' indeed now I find we haven't even a place to carry it in. I've no—b—b—cloth, or anything to hould it."

"Your first, is it?" said the good woman. "Your first! May the marciful queen o' heaven look down upon yees, but it's a bitther day yees war driven out in! Sit down, there, you poor crathur. God pity you, I pray this day, for you *have* a heart-broken look! Sit down awhile, near the fire, you an' the childre! Come over, darlins, an' warm yourselves. Och, oh! but it's a thousand pities to see sich fine childre—handsome an' good lookin' even as they are, brought to this! Come over, good man; get near the fire, for you're wet an' could all of ye. Brian, *ludher* them two lazy thieves o' dogs out o' that. *Eiree suas, a wadhee bradagh, agus go mah a shin!*—be off wid yez, ye lazy divils, that's not worth your feedin'! Come over, honest man."

Owen and his family were placed near the fire; the poor man's heart was full, and he sighed heavily.

"May He that is plased to thry us," he exclaimed, "reward you for this! We are," he continued, "a poor an' a sufferin' family; but it's the will of God that we should be so, an' sure we can't complain widout committin' sin. All we ax now, is, that it may be plasin' to him that brought us low, to enable us to bear up undher our thrials. We would take it to our choice to beg an' be honest, sooner nor to be wealthy, an' wicked! We have our failings, an' our sins, God help us; but still there's nothin' dark or heavy on our consciences. Glory be to the name o' God for it!"

"Throth, I believe you," replied the farmer's wife; "there's thruth an' honesty in your face; one may easily see the remains of dacency about you all. Musha, throw your little things aside, an' stay where ye are to-day: you can't bring out the childre under the teem of rain

* God is sometimes thus termed in Ireland. By "Man" here is meant person or being. He is also called the "Man above"; although this must have been intended for, and often is applied to, Christ only.

an' sleet that 's in it. *Wurrah dheelish*, but it 's the bitther day all out! Faix, Paddy will get a dhrookin, so he will, at that weary fair wid the stirks, poor bouchal—a son of ours that 's gone to Ballyboulteen to sell some cattle, an' he 'll not be worth three hapuns afore he comes back. I hope he 'll have sinse to go into some house, when he 's done, an' dhry himself well, any how, besides takin' somethin' to keep out the could. Put by your things, an' don't think of goin' out sich a day."

"We thank you," replied Owen. "Indeed we're glad to stay undher your roof; for, poor things, they 're badly able to thravel sich a day—these childre."

"Musha, ye ate no breakfast, maybe?"

Owen and his family were silent. The children looked wistfully at their parents, anxious that they should confirm what the good woman surmised; the father looked again at his famished brood and his sinking wife, and nature overcame him.

"Food did not crass our lips this day," replied Owen; "an' I may say hardly anything yestherday."

"Oh, blessed mother! Here, Katty, Murray, drop scrubbin' that dresser, an' put down the midlin' pot for stirabout. Be livin'! *manim an diouol*, woman alive, handle yourself; you might a had it boilin' by this. God presarve us!—to be two days widout atin! Be the crass, Katty, if you 're not alive, I 'll give you a douse o' the churnstaff that 'll bring the fire to your eyes! Do you hear me?"

"I do hear you, an' did often feel you, too, for fraid hearin' wouldn't do. You think there 's no places in the world but your own, I b'lieve. Faix, indeed! it 's well come up wid us, to be randied about wid no less a switch than a churnstaff!"

"Is it givin' back talk, you are? Bad end to me, if you look crucked but I 'll lave you a mark to remimber me by. What woman 'ud put up wid you but myself, you shkamin flipe? It wasn't to give me your bad tongue I hired you, but to do your business; an' be the crass above us, if you turn your tongue on me agin, I 'll give you the weight o' the churnstaff. Is it bekase they 're poor people that it plased God to bring to this, that you turn up your nose at doin' anything to sarve them? There 's not wather enough there, I say—put in more. What signifies all the stirabout that 'ud make? Put plinty in: it 's betther always to have too much than too little. Faix, I tell you, you 'll want a male's meat an' a night's lodgin' afore you die, if you don't mend your manners."

"Och, musha, the poor girl is doin' her best," observed Kathleen; "an' I'm sure she wouldn't be guilty of usin' pride to the likes of us, or to any one that the Lord has laid his hand upon."

"She had betther not, while I 'm to the fore," said her mistress. "What is she herself? Sure if it was a sin to be poor, God help the world. No; it 's neither a sin nor a shame."

"Thanks be to God, no," said Owen; "it 's neither the one nor the other. So long as we keep a fair name, an' a clear conscience, we can't ever say that our case is hard."

After some further conversation a comfortable breakfast was prepared for them, of which they partook with an appetite sharpened by their

long abstinence from food. Their stay here was particularly fortunate, for as they were certain of a cordial welcome, and an abundance of that which they much wanted—wholesome food—the pressure of immediate distress was removed. They had time to think more accurately upon the little preparations for misery which were necessary, and, as the day's leisure was at their disposal, Kathleen's needle and scissors were industriously plied in mending the tattered clothes of her husband and her children, in order to meet the inclemency of the weather.

On the following morning, after another abundant breakfast, and substantial marks of kindness from their entertainers, they prepared to resume their new and melancholy mode of life. As they were about to depart, the farmer's wife addressed them in the following terms—the farmer himself, by the way, being but the shadow of his worthy partner in life—

*Wife*—"Now, good people, you 're takin' the world on your heads——"

*Farmer*—"Ay, good people, you 're takin' the world on your heads——"

*Wife*—"Hould your tongue, Brian, an' suck your dhudeen. It 's me that 's spakin' to them, so none of your palaver, if you plase, till I 'm done, an' then you may prache till Tib's Eve, an' that's neither before Christmas nor afther it."

*Farmer*—"Sure I 'm sayin' nothin', Elveen, barrin' houldin' my tongue, *a shuchar.*"*

*Wife*—"You 're takin' the world on yez, an' God knows 'tis a heavy load to carry, poor crathurs."

*Farmer*—"A heavy load, poor crathurs! God he knows it's that."

*Wife*—"Brian! *Gluntho ma?*—did you hear me? You 'll be puttin' in your gab, an' me spakin'? How-an-iver, as I was sayin', our house was the first ye came to, an' they say there 's a great blessin' to thim that gives the *first* charity to a poor man or woman settin' out to look for their bit."

*Farmer*—"Throgs, ay! Whin they set out to look for their bit."

*Wife*—"By the crass, Brian, you'd vex a saint. What have you to say in it, you *pittiogue?*† Hould your whisht now, an' suck your dhudeen, I say; sure I allow you a quarther o' tobaccy a week, an' what right have you to be puttin' in your gosther when other people 's spakin'?"

*Farmer*—"Go an."

*Wife*—"So, you see, the long an' the short of it is, that whenever you happen to be in this side of the counthry, always come to *us*. You know the ould sayin'—when the poor man comes he brings a blessin', an' when he goes he carries away a curse. You have as much meal as will last yez a day or two; an' God he sees you 're heartily welcome to all ye got?"

*Farmer*—"God he sees you 're heartily welcome——"

*Wife*—"*Chorp an diouol*, Brian, hould your tongue, or I 'll turn you out o' the kitchen. One can't hear their own ears for you, you poor squakin' dhrone. By the crass, I 'll—eh? Will you whisht, now?"

* My sugar.

† Untranslateable—but means a womanly man—a poor effeminate creature.

*Farmer*—"Go an. Amn't I dhrawin' my pipe?"

*Wife*—"Well dhraw *it;* but don't dhraw *me* down upon you, barrin ——. Do you hear me? an' the sthrange people to the fore, too! Well, the Lord be wid yez, an' bless yez! But afore yez go, jist lave your blessin' wid us: for it's a good thing to have the blessin' of the poor."

"The Lord bless you, an' yours!" said Owen, fervently. "May you an' them never—oh, may you never—*never* suffer what we've suffered; nor know what it is to want a male's mate, or a night's lodgin'!"

"Amin!" exclaimed Kathleen; "may the world flow upon you! for your good kind heart desarves it."

*Farmer*—"An' whisper; I wish you'd offer up a prayer for the rulin' o' the tongue. The Lord might hear *you*, but there's no great hopes that ever he'll hear *me;* though I've prayed for it amost ever since I was married, night an' day, winther an' summer; but no use, she's as bad as ever."

This was said in a kind of friendly insinuating undertone to Owen; who, on hearing it, simply nodded his head, but made no other reply.

They then recommenced their journey, after having once more blessed, and been invited by, their charitable entertainers, who made them promise never to pass their house without stopping a night with them.

It is not our intention to trace Owen M'Carthy and his wife through all the variety which a wandering pauper's life affords. He never could reconcile himself to the habits of a mendicant. His honest pride and integrity of heart raised him above it; neither did he sink into the whine and cant of imposture, nor the slang of knavery. No; there was a touch of manly sorrow about him, which neither time, nor familiarity with his degraded mode of life, could take away from him. His usual observation to his wife, and he never made it without a pang of intense bitterness, was—"Kathleen, darlin', it's thrue we have enough to ate an' to dhrink; but *we have no home—no home!*" To a man like him it was a thought of surpassing bitterness, indeed.

"Ah! Kathleen," he would observe, "if we had but the poorest shed that could be built, provided it was *our own*, wouldn't we be happy? The bread we ate, avourneen, doesn't do us good. We don't work for it; it's the bread of shame and idleness: and yet it's Owen M'Carthy that ates it! But, avourneen, that's past; an' we'll never see our own home, or our own hearth agin. That's what's cuttin' into my heart, Kathleen. Never!—never!"

Many a trial, too, of another kind, was his patience called upon to sustain; particularly from the wealthy and the more elevated in life, when his inexperience as a mendicant led him to solicit their assistance.

"Begone, sirrah, off my grounds!" one would say. "Why don't you work, you sturdy impostor," another would exclaim, "rather than stroll about so lazily, training your brats to the gallows?" "You should be taken up, fellow, as a vagrant," a third would observe; "and if I ever catch you coming up my avenue again, depend upon it, I will slip my dogs at you and your idle spawn."

Owen, on these occasions, turned away in silence; he did not curse them; but the pangs of his honest heart went before Him who will, sooner or later, visit upon the heads of such men their cruel spurning and neglect of the poor.

"Kathleen," he observed to his wife, one day, about a year or more after they had begun to beg; "Kathleen, I have been turnin' it in my mind, that some of these childhre might sthrive to earn their bit an' sup, an' their little coverin' of clo'es, poor things. We might put them to herd cows in the summer, an' the *girshas* to somethin' else in the farmers' houses. What do you think, asthore?"

"For God's sake do, Owen; sure my heart's crushed to see them—my own childhre, that I could lay down my life for—beggin' from door to door. Och, do something for them that way, Owen, an' you 'll relieve the heart that loves them. It 's a sore sight to a mother's eye, Owen, to see her childhre beggin' their morsel."

"It is darlin'—it is; we 'll hire out the three eldest,—Brian, an' Owen, an' Pether, to herd cows; an' we may get Peggy into some farmer's house to do loose jobs an' run of messages. Then we 'd have only little Kathleen an' poor Ned along wid us. I 'll thry any way, an' if I can get them places, who knows what may happen? I have a plan in my head that I 'll tell you, thin."

"Arrah, what is it, Owen, jewel? Sure if I know it, maybe when I 'm sorrowful, that thinkin' of it, an' lookin' forrid to it will make me happier. An' I 'm sure, acushla, you would like that."

"But, maybe, Kathleen, if it wouldn't come to pass, that the disappointment 'ud be heavy on you?"

"How could it, Owen? Sure we can't be worse nor we are, whatever happens?"

"Thrue enough, indeed, I forgot that; an' yet we might, Kathleen. Sure we 'd be worse, if we or the childhre had bad health."

"God forgive me thin, for what I said! We might be worse. Well, but what is the plan, Owen?"

"Why, when we get the childhre places, I 'll sthrive to take a little house, an' work as a cottar. Then, Kathleen, '*we 'd have a home of our own.*' I 'd work from light to light; I 'd work before hours an' afther hours; ay, nine days in the week, or we 'd be comfortable in our own little home. We might be poor, Kathleen, I know that, an' hard pressed, too; but then, as I said, we 'd have our own home, an' our own hearth; our morsel, if it 'ud be homely, would be sweet, for it would be the fruits of our own labour."

"Now, Owen, do you think you could manage to get that?"

"Wait, acushla, till we get the childhre settled. Then I 'll thry the other plan, for it 's good to thry anything that could take us out of this disgraceful life."

This humble speculation was a source of great comfort to them. Many a time have they forgotten their sorrows in contemplating the simple picture of their happy little cottage. Kathleen, in particular, drew with all the vivid colouring of a tender mother, and an affectionate wife, the various sources of comfort and contentment to be found even in

a cabin, whose inmates are blessed with a love of independence, industry, and mutual affection.

Owen, in pursuance of his intention, did not neglect, when the proper season arrived, to place out his eldest children among the farmers. The reader need not be told that there was that about him which gained respect. He had, therefore, little trouble in obtaining his wishes on this point, and to his great satisfaction, he saw three of them hired out to earn their own support.

It was now a matter of some difficulty for him to take a cabin and get employment. They had not a single article of furniture, and neither bed nor bedding, with the exception of blankets almost worn past use. He was resolved, however, to give up, at all risks, the life of a mendicant. For this purpose, he and the wife agreed to adopt a plan quite usual in Ireland, under circumstances somewhat different from his: this was, that Kathleen should continue to beg for their support, until the first half-year of their children's service should expire; and in the meantime, that he, if possible, should secure employment for himself. By this means, his earnings, and that of his children, might remain untouched, so that in half a year, he calculated upon being able to furnish a cabin, and proceed, as a cottier, to work for, and support his young children and his wife, who determined, on her part, not to be idle any more than her husband. As the plan was a likely one, and as Owen was bent on earning his bread, rather than be a burthen to others, it is unnecessary to say that it succeeded. In less than a year he found himself once more in a home, and the force of what he felt on sitting for the first time since his pauperism, at his own hearth, may easily be conceived by the reader. For some years after this, Owen got on slowly enough; his wages as a daily labourer being so miserable, that it required him to exert every nerve to keep the house over their head. What, however, will not carefulness and a virtuous determination, joined to indefatigable industry, do?

After some time, backed as he was by his wife, and even by his youngest children, he found himself beginning to improve. In the mornings and the evenings he cultivated his garden and his rood of potato-ground. He also collected with a wheelbarrow, which he borrowed from an acquaintance, compost from the neighbouring road; scoured an old drain before his door; dug rich earth, and tossed it into the pool of rotten water beside the house, and in fact, adopted several other modes of collecting manure. By this means, he had, each spring, a large portion of rich stuff on which to plant his potatoes. His landlord permitted him to spread this for planting upon his land; and Owen, ere long, instead of a rood, was able to plant half an acre, and ultimately, an acre of potatoes. The produce of this, being more than sufficient for the consumption of his family, he sold the surplus, and with the money gained by the sale was enabled to sow half an acre of oats, of which, when made into meal, he disposed of the greater share.

Industry is capital; for even when unaided by capital it creates it; whereas, idleness with capital, produces only poverty and ruin. Owen, after selling his meal and as much potatoes as he could spare, found himself able to purchase a cow. Here was the means of making more

manure; he had his cow, and he had also straw enough for her provender during the winter. The cow by affording milk to his family, enabled them to live more cheaply; her butter they sold, and this, in addition to his surplus meal and potatoes every year, soon made him feel that he had a few guineas to spare. He now bethought him of another mode of helping himself forward in the world: after buying the best "slip" of a pig he could find, a sty was built for her, and ere long he saw a fine litter of young pigs within a snug shed. These he reared until they were about two months old, when he sold them, and found that he had considerably gained by the transaction. This department, however, was under the management of Kathleen, whose life was one of incessant activity and employment. Owen's children, during the period of his struggles and improvements, were, by his advice, multiplying *their* little capital as fast as himself. The two boys, who had now shot up into the stature of young men, were at work as labouring servants in the neighbourhood. The daughters were also engaged as servants with the adjoining farmers. The boys bought each a pair of two-year old heifers, and the daughter one. These they sent to graze up in the mountains at a trifling charge, for the first year or two: when they became springers, they put them to rich infield grass for a few months, until they got a marketable appearance, after which their father brought them to the neighbouring fairs, where they usually sold to great advantage, in consequence of the small outlay required in rearing them.

In fact, the principle of industry ran through the family. There was none of them idle; none of them a burthen or a check upon the profits made by the labourer. On the contrary, "they laid their shoulders together," as the phrase is, and proved to the world, that when the proper disposition is followed up by suitable energy and perseverance, it must generally reward him who possesses it.

It is certainly true that Owen's situation in life *now* was essentially different from that which it had been during the latter years of his struggles *as a farmer*. It was much more favourable, and far better calculated to develope successful exertion. If there be a class of men deserving public sympathy, it is that of the small farmers of Ireland. Their circumstances are fraught with all that is calculated to depress and ruin them; rents far above their ability, increasing poverty, and bad markets. The land, which during the last war might have enabled the renter to pay three pounds per acre, and yet still maintain himself with tolerable comfort, could not now pay more than one pound, or, at the most, one pound ten; and yet, such is the infatuation of landlords, that, in most instances, the terms of leases taken out then are rigorously exacted. Neither can the remission of yearly arrears be said to strike at the root of the evils under which they suffer. The fact of the disproportionate rent hanging over them is a disheartening circumstance, that paralyzes their exertion, and sinks their spirits. If a landlord remit the rent for one term, he deals more harshly with the tenant at the next; whatever surplus, if any, his former indulgence leaves in the tenant's hands, instead of being expended upon his property as capital, and being permitted to lay the foundation of hope and prosperity, is drawn from him, at next term, and the poor struggling

tenant is thrown back into as much distress, embarrassment, and despondency as ever. There are, I believe, few tenants in Ireland of the class I allude to, who are not from one gale to three in arrear. Now, how can it be expected, that such men will labour with spirit and earnestness to raise crops which they may never reap? crops which the landlords may seize upon to secure as much of his rent as he can.

I have known a case in which the arrears were not only remitted, but the rent lowered to a reasonable standard, such as, considering the markets, could be paid. And what was the consequence? The tenant who was looked upon as a negligent man, from whom scarcely any rent could be got, took courage, worked his farm with a spirit and success which he had not evinced before; and ere long was in a capacity to pay his gales to the very day; so that the judicious and humane landlord was finally a gainer by his own excellent economy. This was an experiment, and it succeeded beyond expectation.

Owen M'Carthy did not work with more zeal and ability as an humble cottier, than he did, when a farmer; but the tide was against him as a landholder, and instead of having advanced, he actually lost ground until he became a pauper. No doubt, the peculiarly unfavourable run of two hard seasons, darkened by sickness and famine, were formidable obstacles to him; but he must eventually have failed, even had they not occurred. They accelerated his downfall, but did not cause it.

The Irish people, though poor, are exceedingly anxious to be independent. Their highest ambition is to hold a farm. So strong is this principle in them, that they will, without a single penny of capital, or any visible means to rely on, without consideration or forethought, come forward and offer a rent which, if they reflected only for a moment, they must feel to be unreasonably high. This, indeed, is a great evil in Ireland. But what, in the meantime, must we think of those imprudent landlords, and their more imprudent agents, who let their land to such persons, without proper inquiry into their means, knowledge of agriculture, and general character as moral and industrious men? A farm of land is to be let; it is advertised through the parish; application is to be made before such a day, to so and so. The day arrives, the agent or the land-steward looks over the proposals, and after singling out the highest bidder, declares him tenant, as a matter of course. Now, perhaps, this said tenant does not possess a shilling in the world, nor a shilling's worth. Most likely he is a new-married man, with nothing but his wife's bed and bedding, his wedding-suit, and his blackthorn cudgel, which we may suppose him to keep in reserve for the bailiff. However, he commences his farm; and then follow the shiftings, the scramblings, and the fruitless struggles to succeed, where success is impossible. His farm is not half-tilled; his crops are miserable; the gale-day has already passed; yet, he can pay nothing until he takes it out of the land. Perhaps, he runs away—makes a moonlight flitting—and, by the aid of his friends, succeeds in bringing the crop with him. The landlord, or agent, declares he is a knave; forgetting that the man had no other alternative, and that they were the greater knaves and fools too, for encouraging him to undertake a task that was beyond his strength.

In calamity, we are anxious to derive support from the sympathy of our friends; in our success, we are eager to communicate to them the power of participating in our happiness. When Owen once more found himself independent and safe, he longed to realise two plans on which he had for some time before been seriously thinking. The first was to visit his former neighbours, that they might at length know that Owen M'Carthy's station in the world was such as became his character. The second was, if possible, to take a farm in his native parish, that he might close his days among the companions of his youth, and the friends of his maturer years. He had, also, another motive; there lay the burying-place of the M'Carthys, in which slept the mouldering dust of his own "golden-haired" Alley. With them—in his daughter's grave—he intended to sleep his long sleep. Affection for the dead is the memory of the heart. In no other grave-yard could he reconcile it to himself to be buried; to it had all his forefathers been gathered; and though calamity had separated him from the scenes where they had passed through existence, yet he was resolved that death should not deprive him of its last melancholy consolation;—that of reposing with all that remained of the "departed," who had loved him, and whom he had loved. He believed, that to neglect this, would be to abandon a sacred duty, and felt sorrow at the thought of being like an absent guest from the assembly of *his own* dead; for there is a principle of undying hope in the heart, that carries, with bold and beautiful imagery, the realities of life into the silent recesses of death itself.

Having formed the resolution of visiting his old friends at Tubber Derg, he communicated it to Kathleen and his family; his wife received the intelligence with undisguised delight.

"Owen," she replied, "indeed I'm glad you mintioned it. Many a time the thoughts of our place, an' the people about it, comes over me. I know, Owen, it 'll go to your heart to see it; but still, avourneen, you'd like, too, to see the ould faces an' the warm hearts of them that pitied us, an' helped us, as well as they could, whin we war broken down."

"I would, Kathleen; but I'm not goin' merely to see thim an' the place. I intind, if I can, to take a bit of land somewhere near Tubber Derg. I'm unasy in my mind, for 'fraid I'd not sleep in the grave-yard where all belongin' to me lie."

A chord of the mother's heart was touched; and in a moment the memory of their beloved child brought the tears to her eyes.

"Owen, avourneen, I have one requist to ax of you, an' I'm sure you won't refuse it to me: if I die afore you, let me be buried wid Alley. Who has a right to sleep so near her as her own mother?"

"The child 's in my heart still," said Owen, suppressing his emotion; "thinkin' of the unfortunate mornin' I wint to Dublin, brings her back to me. I see her standin', wid her fair pale face—pale—oh, my God!—wid hunger an' sickness—her little thin clo'es, an' her goolden hair, tossed about by the dark blast—the tears in her eyes, an' the smile, that she once had, on her face—houldin' up her mouth, an' sayin' 'Kiss *me* agin, father;' as if she knew, somehow, that I'd never see her, nor her me, any more. An' whin I looked back, as I was turnin' the corner, there she

stood, strainin' her eyes after her father, that she was then takin' the last sight of until the judgment-day."

His voice here became broken, and he sat in silence for a few minutes.

"It's sthrange," he added, with more firmness, "how she's so often in my mind!"

"But, Owen dear," replied Kathleen, "sure it was the will of God that she should lave us. She's now a bright angel in heaven, an' I dunna if it 's right—indeed, I doubt it 's sinful for us to think so much about her. Who knows but her innocent spirit is makin' inthercession for us all, before the blessed Mother o' God! Who knows but it was her that got us the good fortune that flowed in upon us, an' that made our strugglin' an' our labourin' turn out so *lucky*."

The idea of being *lucky* or *unlucky* is, in Ireland, an enemy to industry. It is certainly better that the people should believe success in life to be, as it is, the result of virtuous exertion, than of contingent circumstances, over which they themselves have no control. Still there was something beautiful in the superstition of Kathleen's affections; something that touched the heart and its dearest associations.

"It's very true, Kathleen," replied her husband; "but God is ever ready to help them that keeps an honest heart, an' do every thing in their power to live creditably. They may fail for a time, or he may thry them for awhile, but sooner or later good intintions and honest labour will be rewarded. Look at ourselves—blessed be his name!"

"But whin do you mane to go to Tubber Derg, Owen?"

"In the beginnin' of the next week. An' Kathleen, ahagur, if you remimber the bitther mornin' we came upon the world—but we'll not be spakin' of that now. I don't like to think of it. Some other time, maybe, when we 're settled among our ould friends, I'll mintion it."

"Well, the Lord bliss your endayvours, any how! Och, Owen, do thry an' get us a snug farm somewhere near them. But you didn't answer me about Alley, Owen?"

"Why, you must have your wish, Kathleen, although I intended to keep that place for myself. Still we can sleep one on aich side of her; an' that may be asily done, for our buryin' ground is large: so set your mind at rest on that head. I hope God won't call us till we see our childhre settled dacently in the world. But sure, at all evints, let his blessed will be done!"

"Amin! amin! It 's not right of any one to keep their hearts fixed too much upon the world; nor even, they say, upon one's own childhre."

"People may love their childhre as much as they plase, Kathleen, if they don't let their *grah* for them spoil the crathurs, by givin' them their own will, till they become headstrong an' overbearin'. Now, let my linen be as white as a bone before Monday, plase goodness; I hope, by that time, that Jack Dogherty will have my new clo'es made; for I intind to go as dacent as ever they seen me in my best days."

"An' so you will, too, avillish. Throth, Owen, it's you that'll be the proud man, steppin' in to them in all your grandeur! Ha, ha, ha! The spirit o' the M'Carthys is in you still, Owen."

"Ha, ha, ha! It is, darlin'; it is, indeed; an' I'd be sarry it wasn't. I long to see poor Widow Murray. I dunna is her son, Jemmy, married. Who knows, afther all we suffered, but I might be able to help her yet? —that is, if she stands in need of it. But, I suppose, her childhre's grown up now, an' able to assist her. Now, Kathleen, mind Monday next; an' have everything ready. I'll stay away a week or so, at the most, an' afther that I'll have news for you about all o' them."

When Monday morning arrived, Owen found himself ready to set out for Tubber Derg. The tailor had not disappointed him; and Kathleen, to do her justice, took care that the proofs of her good housewifery should be apparent in the whiteness of his linen. After breakfast, he dressed himself in all his finery; and it would be difficult to say whether the harmless vanity that peeped out occasionally from his simplicity of character, or the open and undisguised triumph of his faithful wife, whose eye rested on him with pride and affection, was most calculated to produce a smile.

"Now, Kathleen," said he, when preparing for his immediate departure, "I'm thinkin' of what they'll say, when they see me so smooth an' warm-lookin'. I'll engage they'll be axin' one another, 'Musha, how did Owen M'Carthy get an, at all, to be so well to do in the world, as he appears to be, afther failin' on his ould farm?'"

"Well, but Owen, you know how to manage them."

"Throth, I do that. But there is *one* thing they'll never get out o' me, any way."

"You won't tell *that* to any o' them, Owen?"

"Kathleen, if I thought they only suspected it, I'd never show my face in Tubber Derg agin. I think I could bear to be—an' yet it 'ud be a hard struggle wid me too—but I *think* I could bear to be buried among black strangers, rather than it should be said, over my grave, among my own, 'there's where Owen M'Carthy lies—who was the only man, of his name, that ever begged his morsel on the king's highway. There he lies, the descendant of the great M'Carthy Mores, an' yet he was a beggar.' I know, Kathleen achora, it's neither a sin nor a shame to ax one's bit from our fellow-creatures, whin fairly brought to it, widout any fault of our own; but still I feel something in me, that can't bear to think of it widout shame an' heaviness of heart."

"Well, it's one comfort, that nobody knows it but ourselves. The poor childhre, for their own sakes, won't ever breathe it; so that it's likely the sacret i'll be berrid wid us."

"I hope so, acushla. Does this coat sit asy atween the shouldhers? I feel it catch me a little."

"The sorra nicer. There; it was only your waistcoat that was turned down in the collar. Here—hould your arm. There now—it wanted to be pulled down a little at the cuffs. Owen, it's a beauty; an' I think I have good right to be proud of it, for it's every thread my own spinnin'."

"How do I look in it, Kathleen? Tell me thruth, now."

"Throth, you're twenty years younger; the never a day less."

"I think I needn't be ashamed to go afore my ould friends in it, any

way. Now bring me my staff, from undher the bed above; an', in the name o' God, I 'll set out."

"Which o' them, Owen? Is it the oak or the blackthorn?"

"The oak, acushla. Oh, no; not the blackthorn. It 's it that I brought to Dublin wid me, the unlucky thief, an' that I had while we wor *a shaughran*. Divil a one o' me but 'ud blush in the face, if I brought it even in my hand afore them. The oak, ahagur; the oak. You 'll get it atween the foot o' the bed an' the wall."

When Kathleen placed the staff in his hand, he took off his hat and blessed himself, then put it on, looked at his wife, and said—"Now darlin', in the name o' God, I 'll go. Husht, avillish machree, don't be cryin'; sure I 'll be back to you in a week."

"Och! I can't help it, Owen. Sure this is the second time you war ever away from me more nor a day; an' I 'm thinkin' of what happened both to you an' me, the *first* time you wint. Owen, acushla, I feel that if anything happened you, I 'd break my heart."

"Arrah, what 'ud happen me, darlin', wid God to protect me? Now, God be wid you Kathleen dheelish, till I come back to you wid good news, I hope. I 'm not goin' in sickness an' misery, as I wint afore, to see a man that would n't hear my appale to him; an' I 'm lavin' you comfortable, agrah, an' wantin' for nothin'. Sure it 's only about five-an'-twenty miles from this—a mere step. The good God bless an' take care of you, my darlin' wife, till I come home to you!"

He kissed the tears that streamed from her eyes; and, hemming several times, pressed her hand, his face rather averted, then grasped his staff, and commenced his journey.

Scenes like this were important events to our humble couple. Life, when untainted by the crimes and artificial manners which destroy its purity, is a beautiful thing to contemplate among the virtuous poor; and, where the current of affection runs deep and smooth, the slightest incident will agitate it. So was it with Owen M'Carthy and his wife. Simplicity, truth, and affection, constituted their character. In them there was no complication of incongruous elements. The order of their virtues was not broken, nor the purity of their affections violated, by the anomalous blending together of opposing principles, such as are to be found in those who are involuntarily contaminated by the corruption of human society.

Owen had not gone far, when Kathleen called to him: "Owen, ahagur—stand, darlin'; but don't come back a step, for fraid o' bad luck." *

"Did I forget anything, Kathleen?" he inquired. "Let me see; no; sure I have my beads an' my tobaccy box, an' my two clane shirts an' hankerchers in the bundle. What is it, acushla?"

"I need n't be axin' you, for I know you would n't forget it; but for fraid you might—Owen, whin you 're at Tubber Derg, go to little Alley's grave, an' look at it; an' bring me back word how it appears. You might get it cleaned up, if there 's weeds or anything growin' upon it; an' Owen, would you bring me a bit o' the clay, tied up in your pocket.

* When an Irish peasant sets out on a journey, or to transact business in fair or market, he will not, if possible, turn back. It is considered unlucky; as it is also to be crossed by a hare, or met by a red-haired woman.

Whin you 're there, spake to her; tell her it was the lovin' mother that bid you, an' say anything that you 'd think might keep her asy, an' give her pleasure. Tell her we 're not now as we wor whin she was wid us; that we don't feel hunger, nor cowld, nor want; an' that nothin' is a throuble to us, barrin' that we miss *her*—ay, even yet—a *suillish machree** that she was—that we miss her fair face an' goolden hair from among us. Tell her this; an' tell her it was the lovin' mother that said it, an' that sint the message to her."

"I 'll do it all, Kathleen; I 'll do it all—all. An' now go in, darlin', an' don't be frettin'. Maybe we 'll soon be near her, plase God, where we can see the place she sleeps in, often."

They then separated again; and Owen, considerably affected by the maternal tenderness of his wife, proceeded on his journey. He had not, actually, even at the period of his leaving home, been able to determine on what particular friend he should first call. That his welcome would be hospitable, nay, enthusiastically so, he was certain. In the meantime he vigorously pursued his journey; and partook neither of refreshment nor rest, until he arrived, a little after dusk, at a turn of the well-known road, which, had it been day-light, would have opened to him a view of Tubber Derg. He looked towards the beeches, however, under which it stood; but to gain a sight of it was impossible. His road now lying a little to the right, he turned to the house of his sterling friend, Frank Farrell, who had given him and his family shelter and support, when he was driven, without remorse, from his own holding. In a short time he reached Frank's residence, and felt a glow of sincere satisfaction at finding the same air of comfort and warmth about it as formerly. Through the kitchen window he saw the strong light of the blazing fire, and heard, ere he presented himself, the loud hearty laugh of his friend's wife, precisely as light and animated as it had been fifteen years before.

Owen lifted the latch and entered, with that fluttering of the pulse which every man feels on meeting with a friend, after an interval of many years.

"Musha, good people, can ye tell me is Frank Farrell at home?"

"Why, thin, he 's not jist widin now, but he 'll be here in no time entirely," replied one of his daughters. "Won't you sit down, honest man, an' we 'll sind for him."

"I 'm thankful to you," said Owen. "I 'll sit, sure enough, till he comes in."

"Why thin!—eh! it must—it *can* be no other!" exclaimed Farrell's wife, bringing over a candle and looking Owen earnestly in the face; "sure I'd know that voice all the world over! Why, thin, marciful Father—Owen M'Carthy,—Owen M'Carthy, is it your four quarthers that 's livin' an' well? Queen o' heaven, Owen M'Carthy darlin', you 're welcome!" the word was here interrupted by a hearty kiss from the kind housewife;—"welcome a thousand an' a thousand times! *Vick na hoiah!* Owen dear, an' are you livin' at all? An' Kathleen, Owen, an' the childre, an' all of yez—an' how are they?"

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* Light of my heart.

"Throth, we 're livin' an' well, Bridget; never was betther, thanks be to God an' you, in our lives."

Owen was now surrounded by such of Farrell's children, as were old enough to remember him; every one of whom he shook hands with, and kissed.

"Why, thin, the Lord save my sowl, Bridget," said he, "are these the little bouchaleens an' colleens that were runnin' about my feet whin I was here afore? Well, to be sure! How they do shoot up! An' is this Atty?"

"No: but *this* is Atty, Owen; faix, Brian outgrew him; an' here 's Mary, an' this is Bridget Oge."

"Well!—well! But, where did these two young shoots come from? this boy an' the colleen here? They worn't to the fore, in *my* time, Bridget."

"This is Owen, called afther yourself,—an' this is Kathleen. I needn't tell you who she was called afther."

"*Gutsho, alanna? thurm pogue?*—come here, child, and kiss me," said Owen to his little namesake; "an' sure I can't forget the little woman here; *gutsho*, a colleen, and kiss me too."

Owen took her on his knee, and kissed her twice.

"Och, but, poor Kathleen," said he, "will be the proud woman of this, when she hears it; in throth she will be that."

"Arrah! what 's comin' over me!" said Mrs. Farrell. "Brian, run up to Micky Lowrie's, for your father. An' see, Brian, don't say who 's wantin' him, till we give him a start. Mary, come here, acushla," she added to her eldest daughter in a whisper—"take these two bottles, an' fly up to Peggy Finigan's for the full o' them o' whiskey. Now be back before you 're there, or if you don't, that I mightn't, but you 'll see what you 'll get. Fly, aroon, an' don't let the grass grow undher your feet. An' Owen darlin'—but first sit over to the fire:—here get over to this side, it 's the snuggest;—arrah, Owen—an' sure I dunna what to ax you first. You 're all well? all to the fore?"

"All well, Bridget, an' thanks be to heaven, all to the fore."

"Glory be to God! Throth it warms my heart to hear it. An' the childre 's all up finely, boys an' girls?"

"Throth, they are, Bridget, as good lookin' a family o' childre as you'd wish to see. An' what is betther, they 're as good as they 're good-lookin'."

"Throth, they couldn't but be that, if they tuck at all afther their father an' mother. Bridget, aroon, rub the pan betther—an' lay the knife down, I 'll cut the bacon myself, but go an' get a dozen o' the freshest eggs;—an' Kathleen, Owen, how does poor Kathleen look? Does she stand it as well as yourself?"

"As young as ever you seen her. God help her!—a thousand degrees betther nor whin you seen her last."

"An' well to do, Owen?—now tell the thruth? Och, musha, I forget who I 'm spakin' to, or I wouldn't disremimber the ould sayin' that 's abroad this many a year:—'who ever knew a M'Carthy of Tubber Derg to tell a lie, break his word, or refuse to help a friend in distress. But, Owen, you 're well to do in the world?"

"We 're as well, Bridget, or may be betther, nor you ever knew us, except, indeed, afore the ould lase was run out wid us."

"God be praised agin! Musha, turn round a little, Owen, for 'fraid Frank 'ud get too clear a sight of your face at first. Arrah, do you think he 'll know you? Och, to be sure he will; I needn't ax. Your voice would tell upon you, any day."

"Know me! Indeed Frank 'ud know my shadow. He 'll know me wid half a look."

And Owen was right, for quickly did the eye of his old friend recognise him, despite of the little plot that was laid to try his penetration. To describe their interview would be to repeat the scene we have already attempted to depict between Owen and Mrs. Farrell. No sooner were the rites of hospitality performed, than the tide of conversation began to flow with greater freedom. Owen ascertained one important fact, which we will here mention, because it produces, in a great degree, the want of anything like an independent class of yeomanry in the country. On inquiring after his old acquaintances, he discovered that a great many of them, owing to high rents, had emigrated to America. They belonged to that class of independent farmers, who, after the expiration of their old leases, finding the little capital they had saved beginning to diminish, in consequence of rents which they could not pay, deemed it more prudent, while anything remained in their hands, to seek a country where capital and industry might be made available. Thus did the landlords, by their mismanagement and neglect, absolutely drive off their estates, the only men, who, if properly encouraged, were capable of becoming the strength and pride of the country. It is this system, joined to the curse of middlemen and sub-letting, which has left the country without any third grade of decent substantial yeomen, who might stand as a bond of peace between the highest and the lowest classes. It is this which has split the kingdom into two divisions, constituting the extreme ends of society—the wealthy, and the wretched. If this third class existed, Ireland would neither be so political nor discontented as she is; but on the contrary, more remarkable for peace and industry. At present, the lower classes, being too poor, are easily excited by those who promise them a better order of things than that which exists. These theorists step into the exercise of that legitimate influence which the landed proprietors have lost by their neglect. There is no middle class in the country, who can turn round to them and say, "Our circumstances are easy, we want nothing; carry your promises to the poor, for that which you hold forth to *their* hopes, *we* enjoy in reality." The poor soldier, who, because he was wretched, volunteered to go on the forlorn hope, made a fortune; but when asked if he would go on a second enterprise of a similar kind, shrewdly replied; "General, I am *now* an independent man; send some *poor* devil on your forlorn hope who wants to make a fortune."

Owen now heard anecdotes and narratives of all occurrences, whether interesting or strange, that had taken place during his absence. Among others, was the death of his former landlord, and the removal of the agent who had driven him to beggary. Tubber Derg, he found, was then the property of a humane and considerate man, who employed a judicious and benevolent gentleman to manage it.

"One thing, I can tell you," said Frank; "it was but a short time in the new agent's hands, when the dacent farmers stopped goin' to America."

"But Frank," said Owen, and he sighed on putting the question, "who is in Tubber Derg, now?"

"Why, thin, a son of ould Rousin' Red-head's, of Tullyvernon—young Con Roe, or the Ace o' Hearts—for he was called both by the youngsters—if you remimber him. His head's as red, an' double as big, even, as his father's was, an' you know that no hat would fit old Con, until he sent his measure to Jemmy Lamb, the hatter. Dick Nugent put it out on him, that Jemmy always made Rousin' Red-head's hat, either upon the half-bushel pot, or a five-gallon keg of whiskey. 'Talkin' of the keg,' says Dick, 'for the matther o' that,' says he, 'divil a much differ the hat will persave; for the one'—meanin' ould Con's head, who was a hard dhrinker—'the one,' says Con, 'is as much a keg as the other—ha! ha! ha!' Dick met Rousin' Red-head another day; 'Arrah Con,' says he, 'why do you get your hats made upon a *pot*, man alive? Sure that's the rason that your're so fond o' *pot*een.' A quare mad crathur was Dick, an' would go forty miles for a fight. Poor fellow, he got his skull broke in a scrimmage betwixt the Redmonds and the O'Hanlon's; an' his last words were, 'Bad luck to you, Redmond—O'Hanlon, I never thought *you*, above all men, dead an' gone, would be the death o' me.' Poor fellow! he was for pacifyin' them, for a wondher; but instead o' that, he got pacified himself."

"An' how is young Con doin', Frank?"

"Hut, divil a much time he has to do aither well or ill, yit. There was four tenants on Tubber Derg since you left it, an' he's the fifth. It's hard to say how he'll do; but I believe he's the best o' thim, for so far. That may be owin' to the landlord. The rent's let down to him; an' I think he'll be able to take bread, an' good bread too, out of it."

"God send, poor man!"

"Now, Owen, would you like to go back to it?"

"I can't say that. I love the place, *but I suffered too much in it.* No; but I'll tell you, Frank, if there was e'er a snug farm near it that I could get rasonable, I'd take it."

Frank slapped his knee exultingly. "*Ma chuirp!*—do you say so, Owen?"

"Indeed, I do."

"Thin, upon my song, that's the luckiest thing I ever knew. There's, this blessed minute, a farm o' sixteen acres, that the Lacys is lavin'——goin' to America—an' it's to be set. They'll go the week afther next, an' the house needn't be cowld, for you can come to it the very day afther they lave it."

"Well," said Owen, "I'm glad of that. Will you come wid me to-morrow, an' we'll see about it?"

"To be sure I will; an' what's betther, too; the Agint is a son of ould Misther Rogerson's, a man that knows you an' the history o' them you came from, well. An', another thing, Owen! I tell you, whin it's abroad that *you* want to take the farm, there's not a man in the parish would bid agin you. You may know that yourself."

"I think, indeed, they would rather sarve me than otherwise," replied Owen; "an', in the name o' God, we'll see what can be done. Misther Rogerson, himself, 'ud spake to his son for me; so that I'll be sure of his intherest. Arrah, Frank, how is an ould friend o' mine, that I have a great regard for—poor Widow Murray?"

"Widow Murray. Poor woman, *she's* happy.

"You don't mane she's dead?"

"She's dead, Owen, and happy, I trust, in the Saviour. She died last spring was a two years."

"God be good to her sowl! An' are the childhre in her place still? It's she that was the dacent woman."

"Throth, they are; an' sorrow a betther doin' family in the parish than they are. It's they that'll be glad to see you, Owen. Many a time I seen their poor mother, heavens be her bed, lettin' down the tears, whin she used to be spakin' of you, or mintionin' how often you sarved her; espeshially, about some day or other that you previnted her cows from bein' canted for the rint. She's dead now, an' God he knows, an honest hard-workin' woman she ever was."

"Dear me, Frank, isn't it a wondher to think how the people dhrop off! There's Widow Murray, one o' my ouldest frinds, an' Pether M'Mahon, an' Barny Lorinan—not to forget pleasant Rousin' Red-head—all taken away! Well!—well! Sure it's the will o'God! We can't be here always."

After much conversation, enlivened by the bottle, though but sparingly used on the part of Owen, the hour of rest arrived, when the family separated for the night.

The grey dawn of a calm beautiful summer's morning found Owen up and abroad, long before the family of honest Frank had risen. When dressing himself, with an intention of taking an early walk, he was asked by his friend why he stirred so soon, or if he—his host—should accompany him.

"No," replied Owen; "lie still; jist let me look over the counthry while it's asleep. Whin I'm musin' this a-way I don't like any body to be along wid me. I have a place to go an' see, too—an' a message—a tendher message, from poor Kathleen, to deliver, that I wouldn't wish a second person to hear. Sleep, Frank. I'll jist crush the head o' my pipe agin one o' the half-burned turf that the fire was raked wid, an' walk out for an hour or two. Afther our breakfast we'll go an' look about this new farm."

He sallied out as he spoke, and closed the door after him in that quiet thoughtful way for which he was ever remarkable. The season was midsummer, and the morning wanted at least an hour of sun-rise. Owen ascended a little knoll, above Frank's house, on which he stood and surveyed the surrounding country with a pleasing but melancholy interest. As his eye rested on Tubber Derg, he felt the difference strongly between the imperishable glories of nature's works, and those which are executed by man. His house he would not have known, except by its site. It was not, in fact, the same house, but another which had been built in its stead. This disappointed and vexed him. An object on which his affections had been placed was removed. A rude stone house stood

before him, rough and unplastered; against each end of which was built a stable and cow-house, sloping down from the gables to low doors at both sides; adjoining these rose two mounds of filth, large enough to be easily distinguished from the knoll on which he stood. He sighed as he contrasted it with the neat and beautiful farm-house, which shone there in his happy days, white as a lily, beneath the covering of the lofty beeches. There was no air of comfort, neatness, or independence, about it; on the contrary, everything betrayed the evidence of struggle and difficulty, joined, probably, to want both of skill and of capital. He was disappointed, and turned his gaze upon the general aspect of the country, and the houses in which either his old acquaintances or their children lived. The features of the landscape were, certainly, the same; but even here was a change for the worse. The warmth of colouring, which wealth and independence give to the appearance of a cultivated country, was gone. Decay and coldness seemed to brood upon everything he saw. The houses, the farm-yards, the ditches, and enclosures, were all marked by the blasting proofs of national decline. Some exceptions there were to this disheartening prospect; but they were only sufficient to render the torn and ragged evidences of poverty, and its attendant—carelessness—more conspicuous. He left the knoll, knocked the ashes out of his pipe, and putting it into his waistcoat pocket, ascended a larger hill, which led to the grave-yard where his child lay buried. On his way to this hill, which stood about half a mile distant, he passed a few houses of an humble description, with whose inhabitants he had been well acquainted. Some of these stood nearly as he remembered them; but others were roofless, with their dark mud gables either fallen in or partially broken down. He surveyed their smoke-coloured walls with sorrow; and looked, with a sense of the transient character of all man's works, upon the chickweed, docks, and nettles, which had shot up so rankly on the spot where many a chequered scene of joy and sorrow had flitted over the circumscribed circle of humble life, ere the annihilating wing of ruin swept away them and their habitations.

When he had ascended the hill, his eye took a wider range. The more distant and picturesque part of the country lay before him. "Ay!" said he, in a soliloquy, "Lord bless us, how sthrange is this world!—an' what poor crathurs are men! There's the dark mountains, the hills, the rivers, an' the green glens, all the same; an' nothin' else amost but's changed! The very song of that blackbird, in thim thorn-bushes an' hazels below me, is like the voice of an ould friend to my ears. Och, indeed, hardly that, for even the voice of man changes; but that song is the same as I heard it for the best part o' my life. That mornin' star, too, is the same bright crathur up there that it ever was! God help us! Hardly any thing changes but man, an' he seems to think that he can never change; if one is to judge by his thoughtlessness, folly, an' wickedness!"

A smaller hill, around the base of which went the same imperfect road that crossed the glen of Tubber Derg, prevented him from seeing the grave-yard to which he was about to extend his walk. To this road he directed his steps. On reaching it he looked, still with a strong memory of former times, to the glen in which his children, himself, and his ancestors had all, during their day, played in the happy thoughtlessness of child-

hood and youth. But the dark and ragged house jarred upon his feelings. He turned from it with pain, and his eyes rested upon the still green valley with evident relief. He thought of his "buried flower"—"his goolden-haired darlin'," as he used to call her—and almost fancied that he saw her once more wandering waywardly through its tangled mazes, gathering berries, or strolling along the green meadow, with a garland of gowans about her neck. Imagination, indeed, cannot heighten the image of the dead whom we love; but even if it could, there was no standard of ideal beauty in her father's mind beyond that of her own. She had been beautiful; but her beauty was pensive: a fair yet melancholy child; for the charm that ever encompassed her was one of sorrow and tenderness. Had she been volatile and mirthful, as children usually are, he would not have carried so far into his future life the love of her which he cherished. Another reason why he still loved her strongly, was a consciousness that her death had been occasioned by distress and misery; for, as he said, when looking upon the scenes of her brief but melancholy existence—"Avourneen machree, I remimber to see you pickin' the berries; but asthore—asthore—it wasn't for play you did it. It was to keep away the cuttin' of hunger from your heart! Of all our childhre every one said that *you* wor the M'Carthy—never sayin' much, but the heart in you ever full of goodness an' affection. God help me, I'm glad—an', now, that I'm comin' near it—loth to see her grave."

He had now reached the verge of the grave-yard. Its fine old ruin stood there as usual, but not altogether without the symptoms of change. Some persons had, for the purposes of building, thrown down one of its most picturesque walls. Still its ruins clothed with ivy, its mullions moss-covered, its gothic arches and tracery, gray with age, were the same in appearance as he had ever seen them.

On entering this silent palace of Death, he reverently uncovered his head, blessed himself, and, with feelings deeply agitated, sought the grave of his beloved child. He approached it; but a sudden transition from sorrow to indignation took place in his mind, even before he reached the spot on which she lay. "Sacred Mother!" he exclaimed, "who has dared to bury in our ground? Who has—what villain has attimpted to come in upon the M'Carthys—upon the M'Carthy Mores, of Tubber Derg? Who could—had I no friend to prev——eh? Sacred Mother, what's this? Father of heaven forgive me! Forgive me, sweet Saviour, for his bad feelin' I got into! Who—who—could raise a head-stone over the darlin' o' my heart, widout one of us knowin' it! Who—who could do it? But let me see if I can make it out. Oh, who could do this blessed thing, for the poor an' the sorrowful?" He began, and with difficulty read as follows:—

"Here lies the body of Alice M'Carthy, the beloved daughter of Owen and Kathleen M'Carthy, aged nine years. She was descended from the M'Carthy Mores.

"Requiescat in pace.

"This head-stone was raised over her by widow Murray, and her son, James Murray, out of grateful respect for Owen and Kathleen M'Carthy, who never suffered the widow and orphan, or a distressed neighbour, to crave assistance from them in vain, until it pleased God to visit them with affliction."

"Thanks to you, my Saviour!" said Owen, dropping on his knees over

the grave. "Thanks an' praise be to your holy name, that in the middle of my poverty—of all my poverty—I was not forgotten! nor my darlin' child let to lie widout honour in the grave of her family! Make me worthy, blessed Heaven, of what is written down upon me here! An' if the departed spirit of her that honoured the dust of my buried daughter is unhappy, oh, let her be relieved, an' let this act be remimbered to her! Bless her son, too, gracious Father, an' all belongin' to her on this earth! an', if it be your holy will, let them never know distress, or poverty, or wickedness!"

He then offered up a Pater Noster for the repose of his child's soul, and another for the kind-hearted and grateful widow Murray, after which he stood to examine the grave with greater accuracy.

There was, in fact, no grave visible. The little mound, under which lay what was once such a touching image of innocence, beauty, and feeling, had sunk down to the level of the earth about it. He regretted this, inasmuch as it took away, he thought, part of her individuality. Still he knew it was the spot wherein she had been buried, and with much of that vivid feeling, and strong figurative language, inseparable from the habits of thought and language of the old Irish families, he delivered the mother's message to the inanimate dust of her once beautiful and heart-loved child. He spoke in a broken voice, for even the mention of her name aloud, over the clay that contained her, struck with a fresh burst of sorrow upon his heart.

"Alley," he exclaimed, in Irish, "Alley, *nhien machree*, your father that loved *you* more nor he loved any other human crathur, brings a message to you from the mother of your heart, avourneen! She bid me call to see the spot where you're lyin', my buried flower, an' to tell you that we're not now, thanks be to God, as we wor whin you lived wid us. We are well to do now, *acushla oge machree*, an' not in hunger, an' sickness, an' misery, as we wor whin you suffered them all! You will love to hear this, pulse of our hearts, an' to know that, through all we suffered —an' bittherly we did suffer since you departed—we never let you out of our memory. No, *asthore villish*, we thought of you, an' cried afther our poor dead flower, many an' many's the time. An' she bid me tell you, darlin' of my heart, that we feel nothin' now so much as that you are not wid us to share our comfort an' our happiness. Oh, what wouldn't the mother give to have you back wid her; but it can't be—an' what wouldn't I give to have you before my eyes agin, in health an' in life—but it can't be. The lovin' mother sent this message to you, Alley. Take it from her; she bid me tell you that we are well an' happy; our name is pure, and, like yourself, widout spot or stain. Won't you pray for us before God, an' get him an' his blessed Mother to look on us wid favour an' compassion? Farewell, Alley asthore! May you sleep in peace, an' rest on the breast of your great Father in Heaven, until we all meet in happiness together. It's your father that's spakin' to you, our lost flower; an' the hand that often smoothed your goolden head is now upon your grave."

He wiped his eyes as he concluded, and after lifting a little of the clay from her grave, he tied it carefully up, and put it into his pocket.

Having left the grave-yard, he retraced his steps towards Frank Farrell's house. The sun had now risen, and as Owen ascended the larger of the two hills which we have mentioned, he stood again to view the scene that stretched beneath him. About an hour before all was still; the whole country lay motionless, as if the land had been the land of the dead. The mountains, in the distance, were covered with the thin mists of morning; the milder and richer parts of the landscape had appeared in that dim gray distinctness which gives to distant objects such a clear outline. With the exception of the blackbird's song, everything seemed as if stricken into silence; there was not a breeze stirring; both animate and inanimate nature reposed as if in a trance; the very trees appeared asleep, and their leaves motionless, as if they had been of marble. But now the scene was changed. The sun had flung his splendour upon the mountain-tops, from which the mists were tumbling in broken fragments to the valleys between them. A thousand birds poured their songs upon the ear; the breeze was up, and the columns of smoke from the farm-houses and cottages played, as if in frolic, in the air. A white haze was beginning to rise from the meadows; early teams were afoot; and labourers going abroad to their employment. The lakes in the distance shone like mirrors; and the clear springs on the mountain sides glittered in the sun, like gems on which the eye could scarcely rest. Life, and light, and motion, appear to be inseparable. The dew of morning lay upon nature like a brilliant veil, realising the beautiful image of Horace, as applied to woman:

Vultus nimium lubricus aspici.

By-and-by the songs of the early workmen were heard; Nature had awoke; and Owen, whose heart was strongly, though unconsciously, alive to the influence of natural religion, participated in the general elevation of the hour, and sought with freshened spirits the house of his entertainer.

As he entered this hospitable roof, the early industry of his friend's wife presented him with a well-swept hearth and a pleasant fire, before which had been placed the identical chair that they had appropriated to his own use. Frank was enjoying "a blast o' the pipe," after having risen; to which luxury the return of Owen gave additional zest and placidity. In fact, Owen's presence communicated a holiday spirit to the family; a spirit, too, which declined not for a moment during the period of his visit.

"Frank," said Owen, "to tell you the thruth, I'm not half plased wid you this mornin'. I think you didn't thrate me as I ought to expect to be thrated."

"Musha, Owen M'Carthy, how is that?"

"Why, you said nothin' about widow Murray raisin' a head-stone over our child. You kep me in the dark there, Frank, an' sich a start I never got as I did this mornin', in the grave-yard beyant."

"Upon my sowl, Owen, it wasn't my fau't, nor any of our fau'ts; for, to tell you the thruth, we had so much to think and discoorse of last night, that it never sthruck me, good or bad. Indeed it was Bridget that

put it first in my head, afther you wint out, an' thin it was too late. Ay, poor woman, the dacent strain was ever in her, the heavens be her bed!"

"Frank, if any one of her family was to abuse me till the dogs wouldn't lick my blood, I'd only give them back good for evil afther that. Oh, Frank, that goes to my heart! To put a head-stone over my weeny goolden-haired darlin', for the sake of the little thrifles I sarved thim in! Well!—may none belonging to her ever know poverty or hardship! but if they do, an' that I have it——. How-an'-iver, no matther. God bless thim! God bless thim! Wait till Kathleen hears it!"

"An' the best of it was, Owen, that she never expected to see one of your faces. But, Owen, you think too much about that child. Let us talk of something else. You've seen Tubber Derg wanst more?"

"I did; an' I love it still, in spite of the state it's in."

"Ah! it's different from what it was in your happy days. I was spakin' to Bridget about the farm, an' she advises us to go, widout losin' a minute, an' take it if we can."

"It's near this place I'll die, Frank. I'd not rest in my grave if I wasn't berrid among my own; so we'll take the farm if possible."

"Well, then, Bridget, hurry the breakfast, avourneen; an' in the name o' goodness, we'll set out, an' clinch the business this very day."

Owen, as we said, was prompt in following up his determinations. After breakfast they saw the agent and his father, for both lived together. Old Rogerson had been intimately acquainted with the M'Carthys, and, as Frank had anticipated, used his influence with the agent in procuring for the son of his old friend and acquaintance the farm which he sought.

"Jack," said the old gentleman, "you don't probably know the history and character of the Tubber Derg M'Carthys, so well as I do. No man ever required the written bond of a M'Carthy; and it was said of them, and is said still, that the widow and orphan, the poor man or the stranger, never sought their assistance in vain. I, myself, will go security, if necessary, for Owen M'Carthy."

"Sir," replied Owen, "I'm thankful to you; I'm grateful to you. But I wouldn't take the farm, or bid for it at all, unless I could bring forrid enough to stock it as I wish, an' to lay in all that's wantin' to work it well. It 'ud be useless for me to take it—to struggle a year or two—impoverish the land—an' thin run away out of it. No, no; I have what'll put me upon it wid dacency an' comfort."

"Then, since my father has taken such an interest in you, M'Carthy, you must have the farm. We shall get leases prepared, and the business completed in a few days; for I go to Dublin on this day week. Father, I now remember the character of this family; and I remember, too, the sympathy which was felt for one of them, who was harshly ejected, about seventeen or eighteen years ago, out of the lands on which his forefathers had lived, I understand, for centuries."

"I am that man, Sir," returned Owen. "It's too long a story to tell now; but it was only out o' *part* of the lands, Sir, that I was put. What I held was but a poor patch compared to what the family held in my grandfather's time. A great part of it went out of our hands at his death."

"It was very kind of you, Misther Rogerson, to offer to go security for him," said Frank; "but if security was wantin', Sir, I 'd not be willin' to let anybody but myself back him. I 'd go all I 'm worth in the world—an' by my sowl, double as much—for the same man."

"I know that, Frank, an' I thank you; but I could put security in Mr. Rogerson's hands, here, if it was wanted. Good mornin' an thank you both, gintlemen. To tell yez the thruth," he added, with a smile, "I long to be among my ould friends—manin' the people, an' the hills, an' the green fields of Tubber Derg—agin'; an' thanks be to Goodness, sure I will soon."

In fact, wherever Owen went, within the bounds of his native parish, his name, to use a significant phrase of the people, was before him. His arrival at Frank Farrell's was now generally known by all his acquaintances, and the numbers who came to see him were almost beyond belief. During the two or three successive days, he went amongst his old "*cronies;*" and no sooner was his arrival at any particular house intimated, than the neighbours all flocked to him. Scythes were left idle, spades were stuck in the earth, and work neglected for the time being; all crowded about him with a warm and friendly interest, not proceeding from idle curiosity, but from affection and respect for the man.

The interview between him and widow Murray's children was affecting. Owen felt deeply the delicate and touching manner in which they had evinced their gratitude for the services he had rendered them; and young Murray remembered, with a strong gush of feeling, the distresses under which they lay when Owen had assisted them. Their circumstances, owing to the strenuous exertions of the widow's eldest son, soon afterwards improved; and, in accordance with the sentiments of hearts naturally grateful, they had taken that method of testifying what they felt. Indeed, so well had Owen's unparalleled affection for his favourite child been known, that it was the general opinion about Tubber Derg that her death had broken his heart.

"Poor Owen! he 's dead," they used to say; "the death of his weeny one, while he was away in Dublin, gave him the finishin' blow. It broke his heart."

Before the week was expired, Owen had the satisfaction of depositing the lease of his new farm, held at a moderate rent, in the hands of Frank Farrell; who, tying it up along with his own, secured it in the "black chest." Nothing remained now but to return home forthwith, and communicate the intelligence to Kathleen. Frank had promised, as soon as the Lacys should vacate the house, to come with a long train of cars, and a number of his neighbours, in order to transfer Owen's family and furniture to his new dwelling. Everything, therefore, had been arranged; and Owen had nothing to do but hold himself in readiness for the welcome arrival of Frank and his friends.

Owen, however, had no sense of enjoyment when not participated in by his beloved Kathleen. If he felt sorrow, it was less as a personal feeling than as a calamity to her. If he experienced happiness, it was doubly sweet to him as reflected from his Kathleen. All this was mutual between them. Kathleen loved Owen precisely as he loved Kathleen.

Nor let our readers suppose that such characters are not in humble life. It is in humble life, where the springs of feeling are not corrupted by dissimulation and evil knowledge,—that the purest, and tenderest, and strongest virtues are to be found.

As Owen approached his home, he could not avoid contrasting the circumstances of his return *now* with those under which, almost broken-hearted after his journey to Dublin, he presented himself to his sorrowing and bereaved wife about eighteen years before. He raised his hat, and thanked God for the success which had, since that period, attended him, and, immediately after his silent thanksgiving, entered the house.

His welcome, our readers may be assured, was tender and affectionate. The whole family gathered about him, and, on his informing them that they were once more about to reside on a farm adjoining to their beloved Tubber Derg, Kathleen's countenance brightened, and the tear of delight gushed to her eyes.

"God be praised, Owen," she exclaimed; "we will have the ould place afore our eyes, an' what is betther, we will be near where Alley is lyin'. But that's true, Owen," she added, "did you give the light of our hearts the mother's message?"

Owen paused, and his features were slightly overshadowed, but only by the solemnity of the feeling.

"Kathleen," said he, "I gave her your message; but, avourneen, I have sthrange news for you about Alley."

"What, Owen? What is it, acushla? Tell me quick!"

"The blessed child was not neglected: no, but she was honoured in our absence. A head-stone was put over her, an' stands there purtily this minute."

"Mother of Glory, Owen!"

"It's thruth. Widow Murray an' her son Jemmy put it up, wid words upon it that brought the tears to my eyes. Widow Murray is dead, but her childher 's doin' well. May God bless an' prosper them, an' make her happy!"

The delighted mother's heart was not proof against the widow's gratitude, expressed, as it had been, in a manner so affecting. She rocked herself to and fro in silence, whilst the tears fell in showers down her cheeks. The grief, however, which this affectionate couple felt for their child, was not always such as the reader has perceived it to be. It was rather a revival of emotions that had long slumbered, but never died; and the associations arising from the journey to Tubber Derg, had thrown them back, by the force of memory, almost to the period of her death. At times, indeed, their imagination had conjured her up strongly, but the present was an epoch in the history of their sorrow.

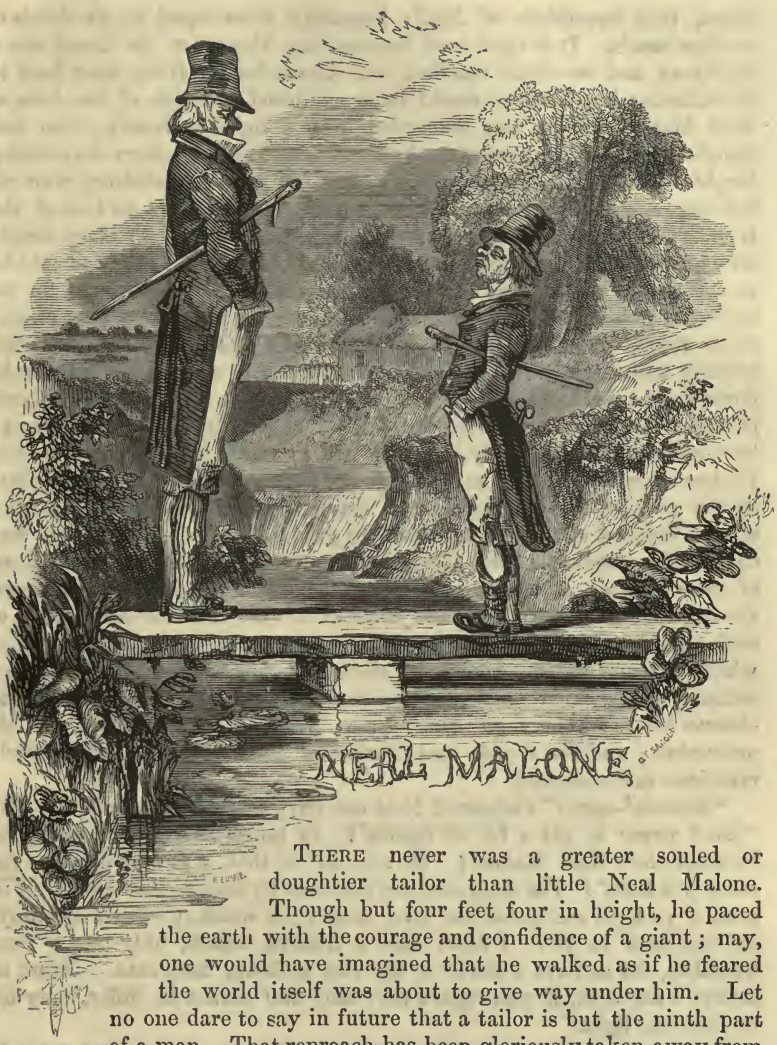
There is little more to be said. Sorrow was soon succeeded by cheerfulness and the glow of expected pleasure, which is ever the more delightful as the pleasure is pure. In about a week their old neighbours, with their carts and cars, arrived; and before the day was closed on which Owen removed to his new residence, he found himself once more sitting at his own hearth, among the friends of his youth, and the companions of his maturer years. Ere the twelvemonth elapsed, he had his house

perfectly white, and as nearly resembling that of Tubber Derg in its better days as possible. About two years* ago we saw him one evening in the month of June, as he sat on a bench beside the door, singing with a happy heart his favourite song of "*Colleen dhas crootha na mo.*" It was about an hour before sunset. The house stood on a gentle eminence, beneath which a sweep of green meadow stretched away to the skirts of Tubber Derg. Around him was a country naturally fertile, and in spite of the national depression still beautiful to contemplate. Kathleen and two servant maids were milking, and the whole family were assembled about the door.

"Well, childher," said the father, "didn't I tell yez the bitther mornin' we left Tubber Derg, not to cry or be disheartened—that 'there was a good God above, who might do somethin' for us *yet ?*' I never *did* give up my trust in Him, an' I never *will.* You see, afther all our little troubles, he has wanst more brought us together, an' made us happy. Praise an' glory to his name!"

I looked at him as he spoke. He had raised his eyes to heaven, and a gleam of elevated devotion, perhaps worthy of being called sublime, irradiated his features. The sun, too, in setting, fell upon his broad temples and iron-gray locks, with a light solemn and religious. The effect to me, who knew his noble character, and all that he had suffered, was as if the eye of God then rested upon the decline of a virtuous man's life with approbation;—as if he had lifted up the glory of his countenance upon him. Would that many of his thoughtless countrymen had been present! They might have blushed for their crimes, and been content to sit and learn wisdom at the feet of Owen M'Carthy.

* It is unnecessary to add, that years have passed since this date was given.




THERE never was a greater souled or doughtier tailor than little Neal Malone. Though but four feet four in height, he paced the earth with the courage and confidence of a giant; nay, one would have imagined that he walked as if he feared the world itself was about to give way under him. Let no one dare to say in future that a tailor is but the ninth part of a man. That reproach has been gloriously taken away from the character of the cross-legged corporation by Neal Malone. He has wiped it off like a stain from the collar of a second-hand coat; he has pressed this wrinkle out of the lying front of antiquity; he has drawn together this rent in the respectability of his profession. No. By him who was breeches-maker to the gods—that is, except, like Highlanders, they eschewed inexpressibles—by him who cut Jupiter's frieze jocks for winter, and eke by the bottom of his thimble, we swear, that Neal Malone was *more* than the ninth part of a man!

Setting aside the Patagonians, we maintain that two-thirds of mortal humanity were comprised in Neal; and, perhaps, we might venture to

assert, that two-thirds of Neal's humanity were equal to six-thirds of another man's. It is right well known that Alexander the Great was a little man, and we doubt whether, had Alexander the Great been bred to the tailoring business, he would have exhibited so much of the hero as Neal Malone. Neal was descended from a fighting family, who had signalised themselves in as many battles as ever any single hero of antiquity fought. His father, his grandfather, and his great grandfather, were all fighting men, and his ancestors in general, up, probably, to Con of the Hundred Battles himself. No wonder, therefore, that Neal's blood should cry out against the cowardice of his calling; no wonder that he should be an epitome of all that was valorous and heroic in a peaceable man, for we neglected to inform the reader that Neal, though "bearing no base mind," never fought any man in his own person. That, however, deducted nothing from his courage. If he did not fight, it was simply because he found cowardice universal. No man would engage him; his spirit blazed in vain: his thirst for battle was doomed to remain unquenched, except by whiskey, and this only increased it. In short, he could find no foe. He has often been known to challenge the first cudgel-players and pugilists of the parish; to provoke men of fourteen stone weight; and to bid mortal defiance to faction heroes of all grades—but in vain. There was that in him which told them that an encounter with Neal would strip them of their laurels. Neal saw all this with a lofty indignation; he deplored the degeneracy of the times, and thought it hard that the descendant of such a fighting family should be doomed to pass through life peaceably, whilst so many excellent rows and riots took place around him. It was a calamity to see every man's head broken but his own; a dismal thing to observe his neighbours go about with their bones in bandages, yet his untouched; and his friends beat black and blue, whilst his own cuticle remained undiscoloured.

"Blur-an'-agers!" exclaimed Neal one day, when half-tipsy in the fair, "am I never to get a bit of fightin'? Is there no cowardly spalpeen to stand afore Neal Malone? Be this an' be that, *I'm blue-mowlded for want of a batin'!* I'm disgracin' my relations by the life I'm ladin'! Will none o' ye fight me aither for love, money, or whiskey—frind or inimy, an' bad luck to ye? I don't care a *traneen* which, only out o' pure frindship, let us have a morsel o' the rale kick-up, 'tany rate. Frind or inimy, I say agin, if you regard me; sure *that* makes no differ, only let us have the fight."

This excellent heroism was all wasted; Neal could not find a single adversary. Except he divided himself like Hotspur, and went to buffets one hand against the other, there was no chance of a fight; no person to be found sufficiently magnanimous to encounter the tailor. On the contrary, every one of his friends—or, in other words, every man in the parish—was ready to support him. He was clapped on the back, until his bones were nearly dislocated in his body; and his hand shaken, until his arm lost its cunning at the needle for half a week afterwards. This, to be sure, was a bitter business—a state of being past endurance. Every man was his friend—no man was his enemy. A desperate position for any person to find himself in, but doubly calamitous to a martial tailor.

Many a dolorous complaint did Neal make upon the misfortune of having none to wish him ill; and what rendered this hardship doubly oppressive, was the unlucky fact that no exertions of his, however offensive, could procure him a single foe. In vain did he insult, abuse, and malign all his acquaintances. In vain did he father upon them all the rascality and villany he could think of; he lied against them with a force and originality that would have made many a modern novelist blush for want of invention—but all to no purpose. The world for once became astonishingly Christian; it paid back all his efforts to excite its resentment with the purest of charity; when Neal struck it on the one cheek, it meekly turned unto him the other. It could scarcely be expected that Neal would bear this. To have the whole world in friendship with a man is beyond doubt rather an affliction. Not to have the face of a single enemy to look upon, would decidedly be considered a deprivation of many agreeable sensations by most people, as well as by Neal Malone. Let who might sustain a loss, or experience a calamity, it was a matter of indifference to Neal. They were *only* his friends, and he troubled neither his head nor his heart about them.

Heaven help us! There is no man without his trials; and Neal, the reader perceives, was not exempt from his. What did it avail him that he carried a cudgel ready for all hostile contingencies? or knit his brows and shook his *kippeen* at the fiercest of his fighting friends? The moment he appeared, they softened into downright cordiality. His presence was the signal of peace; for, notwithstanding his unconquerable propensity to warfare, he went abroad as the genius of unanimity, though carrying in his bosom the redoubtable disposition of a warrior; just as the sun, though the source of light himself, is said to be dark enough at bottom.

It could not be expected that Neal, with whatever fortitude he might bear his other afflictions, could bear such tranquillity like a hero. To say that he bore it as one, would be to basely surrender his character; for what hero ever bore a state of tranquillity with courage? It affected his cutting out! It produced what Burton calls "a windie melancholie," which was nothing else than an accumulation of courage that had no means of escaping, if courage can without indignity be ever said to escape. He sat uneasy on his lap-board. Instead of cutting out soberly, he flourished his scissors as if he were heading a faction; he wasted much chalk by scoring his cloth in wrong places, and even caught his hot goose without a holder. These symptoms alarmed his friends, who persuaded him to go to a doctor. Neal went, to satisfy them; but he knew that no prescription could drive the courage out of him—that he was too far gone in heroism to be made a coward of by apothecary stuff. Nothing in the pharmacopœia could physic him into a pacific state. His disease was simply the want of an enemy, and an unaccountable superabundance of friendship on the part of his acquaintances. How could a doctor remedy this by a prescription? Impossible. The doctor, indeed, recommended bloodletting; but to lose blood in a peaceable manner was not only cowardly, but a bad cure for courage. Neal declined it: he would lose no blood for any man until he could not help it; which was giving the character

of a hero at a single touch. *His* blood was not to be thrown away in this manner; the only lancet ever applied to his relations was the cudgel, and Neal scorned to abandon the principles of his family.

His friends finding that he reserved his blood for more heroic purposes than dastardly phlebotomy, knew not what to do with him. His perpetual exclamation was, as we have already stated, "*I'm blue-mowlded for want of a batin'!*" They did everything in their power to cheer him with the hope of a drubbing; told him he lived in an excellent country for a man afflicted with his malady; and promised, if it were at all possible, to create him a private enemy or two, who, they hoped in heaven, might trounce him to some purpose.

This sustained him for a while; but as day after day passed, and no appearance of action presented itself, he could not choose but increase in courage. His soul, like a sword blade too long in the scabbard, was beginning to get fuliginous by inactivity. He looked upon the point of his own needle, and the bright edge of his scissors, with a bitter pang, when he thought of the spirit rusting within him: he meditated fresh insults, studied new plans, and hunted out cunning devices for provoking his acquaintances to battle, until by degrees he began to confound his own brain, and to commit more grievous oversights in his business than ever. Sometimes he sent home to one person a coat, with the legs of a pair of trousers attached to it for sleeves, and dispatched to another the arms of the aforesaid coat tacked together as a pair of trousers. Sometimes the coat was made to button behind instead of before, and he frequently placed the pockets in the lower part of the skirts, as if he had been in league with cut-purses.

This was a melancholy situation, and his friends pitied him accordingly.

"Don't be cast down, Neal," said they, "your friends feel for you, poor fellow."

"Divil carry my frinds," replied Neal, "sure there 's not one o' yez frindly enough to be my inimy. Tare-an'-ounze! what 'll I do? *I'm blue-mowlded for want of a batin'!*"

Seeing that their consolation was thrown away upon him, they resolved to leave him to his fate; which they had no sooner done than Neal had thoughts of taking to the *Skiomachia* as a last remedy. In this mood he looked with considerable antipathy at his own shadow for several nights; and it is not to be questioned, but that some hard battles would have taken place between them, were it not for the cunning of the shadow, which declined to fight him in any other position than with its back to the wall. This occasioned him to pause, for the wall was a fearful antagonist, inasmuch that it knew not when it was beaten; but there was still an alternative left. He went to the garden one clear day about noon, and hoped to have a bout with the shade, free from interruption. Both approached, apparently eager for the combat, and resolved to conquer or die, when a villanous cloud happening to intercept the light, gave the shadow an opportunity of disappearing; and Neal found himself once more without an opponent.

"It 's aisy known," said Neal, "you haven't the *blood* in you, or you 'd come to the scratch like a man."

He now saw that fate was against him, and that any further hostility towards the shadow was only a tempting of Providence. He lost his health, spirits, and everything but his courage. His countenance became pale and peaceful looking; the bluster departed from him; his body shrunk up like a withered parsnip. Thrice was he compelled to take in his clothes, and thrice did he ascertain that much of his time would be necessarily spent in pursuing his retreating person through the solitude of his almost deserted garments.

God knows it is difficult to form a correct opinion upon a situation so paradoxical as Neal's was. To be reduced to skin and bone by the downright friendship of the world, was, as the sagacious reader will admit, next to a miracle. We appeal to the conscience of any man who finds himself without an enemy, whether he be not a greater skeleton than the tailor; we will give him fifty guineas provided he can show a calf to his leg. We know he could not; for the tailor had none, and that was because he had not an enemy. No man in friendship with the world ever has calves to his legs. To sum up all in a paradox of our own invention, for which we claim the full credit of originality, we now assert, that *more men have risen in the world by the injury of their enemies, than have risen by the kindness of their friends.* You may take this, reader, in any sense; apply it to hanging if you like, it is still immutably and immovably true.

One day Neal sat cross-legged, as tailors usually sit, in the act of pressing a pair of breeches; his hands were placed, backs up, upon the handle of his goose, and his chin rested upon the back of his hands. To judge from his sorrowful complexion one would suppose that he sat rather to be sketched as a picture of misery, or of heroism in distress, than for the industrious purpose of pressing the seams of a garment. There was a great deal of New Burlington-street pathos in his countenance; his face, like the times, was rather out of joint; "the sun was just setting, and his golden beams fell, with a saddened splendour, athwart the tailor's" —— the reader may fill up the picture.

In this position sat Neal, when Mr. O'Connor, the schoolmaster, whose inexpressibles he was turning for the third time, entered the workshop. Mr. O'Connor, himself, was as finished a picture of misery as the tailor. There was a patient subdued kind of expression in his face, which indicated a very fair portion of calamity; his eye seemed charged with affliction of the first water; on each side of his nose might be traced two dry channels which, no doubt, were full enough while the tropical rains of his countenance lasted. Altogether, to conclude from appearances, it was a dead match in affliction between him and the tailor; both seemed sad, fleshless, and unthriving.

"Misther O'Connor," said the tailor, when the schoolmaster entered, "won't you be pleased to sit down?"

Mr. O'Connor sat; and, after wiping his forehead, laid his hat upon the lap-board, put his half handkerchief in his pocket, and looked upon the tailor. The tailor, in return, looked upon Mr. O'Connor; but neither of them spoke for some minutes. Neal, in fact, appeared to be wrapped up in his own misery, and Mr. O'Connor in his; or, as we often have

much gratuitous sympathy for the distresses of our friends, we question but the tailor was wrapped up in Mr. O'Connor's misery, and Mr. O'Connor in the tailor's.

Mr. O'Connor at length said—"Neal, are my inexpressibles finished?"

"I am now pressin' your inexpressibles," replied Neal; but, be my sowl, Mr. O'Connor, it's not your inexpressibles I'm thinkin' of. I'm not the ninth part of what I was. I'd hardly make paddin' for a collar now."

"Are you able to carry a staff still, Neal?"

"I've a light hazel one that's handy," said the tailor; but where's the use of carryin' it, whin I can get no one to fight wid. Sure I'm disgracing my relations by the life I'm leadin'. I'll go to my grave widout ever batin' a man, or bein' bate myself; that's the vexation. Divil the row ever I was able to kick up in my life; *so that I'm fairly bluemowlded for want of a batin.*' But if you have patience———',

"Patience!" said Mr. O'Connor, with a shake of the head, that was perfectly disastrous even to look at; "patience, did you say, Neal?"

"Ay," said Neal, "an,' be my sowl, if you deny that I said patience, I'll break your head!"

"Ah, Neal," returned the other, "I don't deny it—for though I am teaching philosophy, knowledge, and mathematics, every day in my life, yet I'm learning patience myself both night and day. No, Neal; I have forgotten to deny any thing. I have not been guilty of a contradiction, out of my own school, for the last fourteen years. I once expressed the shadow of a doubt about twelve years ago, but ever since I have abandoned even doubting. That doubt was the last expiring effort at maintaining my domestic authority—but I suffered for it."

"Well," said Neal, "if you have patience, I'll tell you what afflicts me from beginnin' to endin'."

"I *will* have patience," said Mr. O'Connor, and he accordingly heard a dismal and indignant tale from the tailor.

"You have told me that fifty times over," said Mr. O'Connor, after hearing the story. Your spirit is too martial for a pacific life. If you follow my advice, I will teach you how to ripple the calm current of your existence to some purpose. *Marry a wife.* For twenty-five years I have given instructions in three branches, viz.—philosophy, knowledge, and mathematics—I am also well versed in matrimony, and I declare that, upon my misery, and by the contents of all my afflictions, it is my solemn and melancholy opinion, that, if you marry a wife, you will, before three months pass over your concatenated state, not have a single complaint to make touching a superabundance of peace and tranquillity, or a love of fighting."

"Do you mane to say that any woman would make me afeard?" said the tailor, deliberately rising up and getting his cudgel. "I'll thank you merely to go over the words agin, till I thrash you widin an inch o' your life. That's all."

"Neal," said the schoolmaster, meekly, "I won't fight; I have been too often subdued ever to presume on the hope of a single victory. My spirit is long since evaporated; I am like one of your own shreds, a mere

selvage. Do you not know how much my habilaments have shrunk in, even within the last five years ? Hear me, Neal; and venerate my words as if they proceeded from the lips of a prophet. If you wish to taste the luxury of being subdued—if you are, as you say, *blue-moulded for want of a beating*, and sick at heart of a peaceful existence—why, MARRY A WIFE. Neal, send my breeches home with all haste, *for they are wanted*, you understand. Farewell!"

Mr. O'Connor, having thus expressed himself, departed, and Neal stood, with the cudgel in his hand, looking at the door out of which he passed, with an expression of fierceness, contempt, and reflection, strongly blended on the ruins of his once heroic visage.

Many a man has happiness within his reach if he but knew it. The tailor had been, hitherto, miserable because he pursued a wrong object. The schoolmaster, however, suggested a train of thought upon which Neal now fastened with all the ardour of a chivalrous temperament. Nay, he wondered that the family spirit should have so completely seized upon the fighting side of his heart, as to preclude all thoughts of matrimony; for he could not but remember that his relations were as ready for marriage as for fighting. To doubt this, would have been to throw a blot upon his own escutcheon. He, therefore, very prudently asked himself, to whom, if he did not marry, should he transmit his courage. He was a single man, and, dying as such, he would be the sole depository of his own valour, which, like Junius's secret, must perish with him. If he could have left it, as a legacy, to such of his friends as were most remarkable for cowardice, why the case would be altered; but this was impossible—and he had now no other means of preserving it to posterity than by creating a posterity to inherit it. He saw, too, that the world was likely to become convulsed. Wars, as every body knew, were certainly to break out; and would it not be an excellent opportunity for being father to a colonel, or, perhaps, a general, that might astonish the world.

The change visible in Neal, after the schoolmaster's last visit, absolutely thunderstruck all who knew him. The clothes, which he had rashly taken in to fit his shrivelled limbs, were once more let out. The tailor expanded with a new spirit; his joints ceased to be supple, as in the days of his valour; his eye became less fiery, but more brilliant. From being martial, he 'got desperately gallant; but, somehow, he could not afford to act the hero and lover both at the same time. This, perhaps, would be too much to expect from a tailor. His policy was better. He resolved to bring all his available energy to bear upon the charms of whatever fair nymph he should select for the honour of matrimony; to waste his spirit in fighting would, therefore, be a deduction from the single purpose in view.

The transition from war to love is by no means so remarkable as we might at first imagine. We quote Jack Falstaff in proof of this, or, if the reader be disposed to reject our authority, then we quote Ancient Pistol himself—both of whom we consider as the most finished specimens of heroism that ever carried a safe skin. Acres would have been a hero had he worn gloves to prevent the courage from oozing out at his palms, or not felt such an unlucky antipathy to the "snug lying in the Abbey;" and as

for Captain Bobadil, he never had an opportunity of putting his plan, for vanquishing an army, into practice. We fear, indeed, that neither his character, nor Ben Johnson's knowledge of human nature, is properly understood; for it certainly could not be expected that a man, whose spirit glowed to encounter a whole host, could, without tarnishing his dignity, if closely pressed, condescend to fight an individual. But as these remarks on courage may be felt by the reader as an invidious introduction of a subject disagreeable to him, we beg to hush it for the present and return to the tailor.

No sooner had Neal begun to feel an inclination to matrimony, than his friends knew that his principles had veered, by the change now visible in his person and deportment. They saw he had *ratted* from courage, and joined love. Heretofore his life had been all winter, darkened by storm and hurricane. The fiercer virtues had played the devil with him; every word was thunder, every look lightning; but now all that had passed away;—before, he was the *fortiter in re*, at present he was the *suaviter in modo*. His existence was perfect spring—beautifully vernal. All the amiable and softer qualities began to bud about his heart; a genial warmth was diffused over him; his soul got green within him; every day was serene, and if a cloud happened to become visible, there was a roguish rainbow astride of it, on which sat a beautiful Iris that laughed down at him, and seemed to say, "why the dickens, Neal, don't you marry a wife?"

Neal could not resist the afflatus which descended on him; an ethereal light dwelled, he thought, upon the face of nature; the colour of the cloth, which he cut out from day to day, was, to his enraptured eye, like the colour of cupid's wings—all purple; his visions were worth their weight in gold; his dreams, a credit to the bed he slept on; and his feelings, like blind puppies, young and alive to the milk of love and kindness which they drew from his heart. Most of this delight escaped the observation of the world, for Neal, like your true lover, became shy and mysterious. It is difficult to say what he resembled; no dark lantern ever had more light shut up within itself, than Neal had in his soul, although his friends were not aware of it. They knew, indeed, that he had turned his back upon valour; but beyond this their knowledge did not extend.

Neal was shrewd enough to know that what he felt must be love;—nothing else could distend him with happiness, until his soul felt light and bladder-like, but love. As an oyster opens, when expecting the tide, so did his soul expand at the contemplation of matrimony. Labour ceased to be a trouble to him; he sang and sewed from morning to night; his hot goose no longer burned him, for his heart was as hot as his goose; the vibrations of his head, at each successive stitch, were no longer sad and melancholy. There was a buoyant shake of exultation in them which showed that his soul was placid and happy within him.

Endless honour be to Neal Malone for the originality with which he managed the tender sentiment! He did not, like your commonplace lovers, first discover a pretty girl, and afterwards become enamoured of her. No such thing, he had the passion prepared beforehand—cut out and made-up as it were, ready for any girl whom it might fit. This was

falling in love in the abstract, and let no man condemn it without a trial; for many a long-winded argument could be urged in its defence. It is always wrong to commence business without capital, and Neal had a good stock to begin with. All we beg is, that the reader will not confound it with Platonism, which never marries; but he is at full liberty to call it Socratism, which takes unto itself a wife, and suffers accordingly.

Let no one suppose that Neal forgot the schoolmaster's kindness, or failed to be duly grateful for it. Mr. O'Connor was the first person whom he consulted touching his passion. With a cheerful soul he waited on that melancholy and gentleman-like man, and in the very luxury of his heart told him that he was in love.

"In love, Neal!" said the schoolmaster. "May I inquire with whom?"

"Wid nobody in particular, yet," replied Neal; "but of late I 'm got divilish fond o' the girls in general."

"And do you call that being in love, Neal?" said Mr. O'Connor.

"Why, what else would I call it?" returned the tailor. "Amn't I fond of them?"

"Then it must be what is termed the Universal Passion, Neal;" observed Mr. O'Connor, "although it is the first time I have seen such an illustration of it as you present in your own person."

"I wish you would advise me how to act," said Neal; "I 'm as happy as a prince since I began to get fond o' them, an' to think of marriage."

The schoolmaster shook his head again, and looked rather miserable. Neal rubbed his hands with glee, and looked perfectly happy. The schoolmaster shook his head again, and looked more miserable than before. Neal's happiness also increased on the second rubbing.

Now, to tell the secret at once, Mr. O'Connor would not have appeared so miserable, were it not for Neal's happiness; nor Neal so happy, were it not for Mr. O'Connor's misery. It was all the result of *contrast;* but this you will not understand unless you be deeply read in modern novels.

Mr. O'Connor, however, was a man of sense, who knew, upon this principle, that the longer he continued to shake his head, the more miserable he must become, and the more also would he increase Neal's happiness; but he had no intention of increasing Neal's happiness at his own expense—for, upon the same hypothesis, it would have been for Neal's interest had he remained shaking his head there, and getting miserable until the day of judgment. He consequently declined giving the third shake, for he thought that plain conversation was, after all, more significant and forcible than the most eloquent nod, however ably translated.

"Neal," said he, "could you, by stretching your imagination, contrive to rest contented with nursing your passion in solitude, and love the sex at a distance?"

"How could I nurse and mind my business?" replied the tailor. "I 'll never nurse so long as I 'll have the wife; and as for 'magination it depends upon the grain of it, whether I can stretch it or not. I don't know that I ever made a coat of it in my life."

"You don't understand me, Neal," said the schoolmaster. "In recom-

mending marriage, I was only driving one evil out of you by introducing another. Do you think that, if you abandoned all thoughts of a wife, you would get heroic again?—that is, would you take once more to the love of fighting?"

"There is no doubt but I would," said the tailor: "if I miss the wife, I'll kick up such a dust as never was seen in the parish, an' you 're the first man that I'll lick. But now that I'm in love," he continued, "sure, I ought to look out for the wife."

"Ah! Neal," said the schoolmaster, "you are tempting destiny: your temerity be, with all its melancholy consequences, upon your own head."

"Come," said the tailor, "it wasn't to hear you groaning to the tune of "Dhrimmindhoo,' or 'The ould woman rockin' her cradle,' that I came; but to know if you could help me in makin' out the wife. That's the discoorse."

"Look at me, Neal," said the schoolmaster, solemnly; "I am at this moment, and have been any time for the last fifteen years, a living *caveto* against matrimony. I do not think that earth possesses such a luxury as a single solitary life. Neal, the monks of old were happy men: they were all fat and had double chins; and, Neal, I tell you, that all fat men are in general happy. Care cannot come at them so readily as at a thin man; before it gets through the strong outworks of flesh and blood with which they are surrounded, it becomes treacherous to its original purpose, joins the cheerful spirits it meets in the system, and dances about the heart in all the madness of mirth; just like a sincere ecclesiastic, who comes to lecture a good fellow against drinking, but who forgets his lecture over his cups, and is laid under the table with such success, that he either never comes to finish his lecture, or comes often to be laid under the table. Look at me, Neal, how wasted, fleshless, and miserable, I stand before you. You know how my garments have shrunk in, and what a solid man I was before marriage. Neal, pause, I beseech you: otherwise you stand a strong chance of becoming a nonentity like myself."

"I don't care what I become," said the tailor; "I can't think that you'd be so unrasonable as to expect that any of the Malones should pass out of the world widout either bein' bate or marrid. Have reason, Mr. O'Connor, an' if you can help me to the wife, I promise to take in your coat the next time for nothin'."

"Well, then," said Mr. O'Connor, "what would you think of the butcher's daughter, Biddy Neil? You have always had a thirst for blood, and here you may have it gratified in an innocent manner, should you ever become sanguinary again. 'Tis true, Neal, she is twice your size, and possesses three times your strength; but for that very reason, Neal, marry her if you can. Large animals are placid; and heaven preserve those bachelors, whom I wish well, from a small wife: 'tis such who always wield the sceptre of domestic life, and rule their husbands wi[illegible] a rod of iron."

"Say no more, Mr. O'Connor," replied the tailor, "she 's th[illegible]ry girl I'm in love wid, an' never fear, but I'll overcome her heart [illegible]n be done by man. Now, step over the way to my house, an' we [illegible] a sup on the head of it. Who 's that calling?"

Mrs Malone taking Neal to bed

"Ah! Neal, I know the tones—there's a shrillness in them not to be mistaken. Farewell! I must depart; you have heard the proverb, 'those who are bound must obey.' Young Jack, I presume is squalling, and I must either nurse him, rock the cradle, or sing comic tunes for him, though heaven knows with what a disastrous heart I often sing 'Begone dull care,' the 'Rakes of Newcastle,' or, 'Peas upon a trencher.' Neal, I say again, pause before you take this leap in the dark. Pause, Neal, I entreat you. Farewell!"

Neal, however, was gifted with the heart of an Irishman, and scorned caution as the characteristic of a coward; he had, as it appeared, abandoned all design of fighting, but the courage still adhered to him even in making love. He consequently conducted the siege of Biddy Neil's heart with a degree of skill and valour which would not have come amiss to Marshal Gerald at the siege of Antwerp. Locke or Dugald Stewart, indeed, had they been cognizant of the tailor's triumph, might have illustrated the principle on which he succeeded—as to ourselves, we can only conjecture it. Our own opinion is, that they were both animated with a congenial spirit. Biddy was the very pink of pugnacity, and could throw in a body blow, or plant a facer, with singular energy and science. Her prowess hitherto had, we confess, been displayed only within the limited range of domestic life; but should she ever find it necessary to exercise it upon a larger scale, there was no doubt whatsoever, in the opinion of her mother, brothers, and sisters, every one of whom she had successively subdued, that she must undoubtedly distinguish herself. There was certainly one difficulty which the tailor had *not* to encounter in the progress of his courtship; the field was his own; he had not a rival to dispute his claim. Neither was there any opposition given by her friends; they were, on the contrary, all anxious for the match; and when the arrangements were concluded, Neal felt his hand squeezed by them in succession, with an expression more resembling condolence than joy. Neal, however, had been bred to tailoring, and not to metaphysics; he could cut out a coat very well, but we do not say that he could trace a principle—as what tailor, except Jeremy Taylor, could?

There was nothing particular in the wedding. Mr. O'Connor was asked by Neal to be present at it: but he shook his head, and told him that he had not courage to attend it, or inclination to witness any man's sorrows but his own. He met the wedding party by accident, and was heard to exclaim with a sigh, as they flaunted past him in gay exuberance of spirits—"Ah, poor Neal! he is going like one of her father's cattle to the shambles! Woe is me for having suggested matrimony to the tailor! He will not long be under the necessity of saying that he 'is blue-moulded for want of a beating.' The butcheress will fell him like a Kerry ox, and I may have his blood to answer for, and his discomfiture to feel for, in addition to my own miseries."

On the evening of the wedding-day, about the hour of ten o'clock, Neal —whose spirits were uncommonly exalted, for his heart luxuriated within him—danced with his bride's maid; after the dance he sat beside her, and got eloquent in praise of her beauty; and it is said too, that he whispered to her, and chucked her chin with considerable gallantry.

The *tête-à-tête* continued for some time without exciting particular attention, with one exception; but *that* exception was worth a whole chapter of general rules. Mrs. Malone rose up, then sat down again, and took off a glass of the native; she got up a second time—all the wife rushed upon her heart—she approached them, and in a fit of the most exquisite sensibility, knocked the bride's maid down, and gave the tailor a kick of affecting pathos upon the inexpressibles. The whole scene was a touching one on both sides. The tailor was sent on all-fours to the floor; but Mrs. Malone took him quietly up, put him under her arm, as one would a lap dog, and with stately step marched away to the connubial apartment, in which everything remained very quiet for the rest of the night.

The next morning Mr. O'Connor presented himself to congratulate the tailor on his happiness. Neal, as his friend shook hands with him, gave the schoolmaster's fingers a slight squeeze, such as a man gives who would gently intreat your sympathy. The schoolmaster looked at him, and thought he shook his head. Of this, however, he could not be certain; for, as he shook his own during the moment of observation, he concluded that it might be a mere mistake of the eye, or, perhaps, the result of a mind predisposed to be credulous on the subject of shaking heads.

We wish it were in our power to draw a veil, or curtain, or blind of some description, over the remnant of the tailor's narrative that is to follow; but as it is the duty of every faithful historian to give the secret causes of appearances which the world in general do not understand, so we think it but honest to go on, impartially and faithfully, without shrinking from the responsibility that is frequently annexed to truth.

For the first three days after matrimony, Neal felt like a man who had been translated to a new and more lively state of existence. He had expected, and flattered himself, that, the moment this event should take place, he would once more resume his heroism, and experience the pleasure of a drubbing. This determination he kept a profound secret—nor was it known until a future period, when he disclosed it to Mr. O'Connor. He intended, therefore, that marriage should be nothing more than a mere parenthesis in his life—a kind of asterisk, pointing, in a note at the bottom, to this single exception in his general conduct—a *nota bene* to the spirit of a martial man, intimating that he had been peaceful only for a while. In truth, he was, during the influence of love over him, and up to the very day of his marriage, secretly as blue-moulded as ever for want of a beating. The heroic *penchant* lay snugly latent in his heart, unchecked and unmodified. He flattered himself that he was achieving a capital imposition upon the world at large—that he was actually hoaxing mankind in general—and that such an excellent piece of knavish tranquillity had never been perpetrated before his time.

On the first week after his marriage, there chanced to be a fair in the next market-town. Neal, after breakfast, brought forward a bunch of *shillelahs*, in order to select the best; the wife inquired the purpose of the selection, and Neal declared that he was resolved to have a fight that day, if it were to be had, he said, for "love or money." "The thruth is," he exclaimed, strutting with fortitude about the house, "the thruth is, that I've *done* the whole of yez—*I'm as blue-mowlded as ever for want of a batin'*."

"Don't go," said the wife.

"I *will* go," said Neal, with vehemence; "I'll go if the whole parish was to go to prevint me."

*In about another half-hour Neal sat down quietly to his business, instead of going to the fair!*

Much ingenious speculation might be indulged in, upon this abrupt termination to the tailor's most formidable resolution; but, for our own part, we will prefer going on with the narrative, leaving the reader at liberty to solve the mystery as he pleases. In the mean time, we say this much—let those who cannot make it out, carry it to their tailor; it is a tailor's mystery, and no one has so good a right to understand it—except perhaps, a tailor's wife.

At the period of his matrimony, Neal had become as plump and as stout as he ever was known to be in his plumpest and stoutest days. He and the schoolmaster had been very intimate about this time; but we know not how it happened that soon afterwards he felt a modest bridelike reluctance in meeting with that afflicted gentleman. As the eve of his union approached, he was in the habit, during the schoolmaster's visits to his workshop, of alluding, in rather a sarcastic tone, considering the unthriving appearance of his friend, to the increasing lustiness of his person. Nay, he has often leaped up from his lap-board, and, in the strong spirit of exultation, thrust out his leg in attestation of his assertion, slapping it, moreover, with a loud laugh of triumph, that sounded like a knell to the happiness of his emaciated acquaintance. The schoolmaster's philosophy, however, unlike his flesh, never departed from him; his usual observation was, "Neal, we are both receding from the same point; you increase in flesh, whilst I, heaven help me, am fast diminishing."

The tailor received these remarks with very boisterous mirth, whilst Mr. O'Connor simply shook his head, and looked sadly upon his limbs, now shrouded in a superfluity of garments, somewhat resembling a slender thread of water in a shallow summer stream, nearly wasted away, and surrounded by an unproportionate extent of channel.

The fourth month after the marriage arrived. Neal, one day, near its close, began to dress himself in his best apparel. Even then, when buttoning his waistcoat, he shook his head after the manner of Mr. O'Connor, and made observations upon the great extent to which it over-folded him.

Well, thought he, with a sigh—this waistcoat certainly *did* fit me to a T; but it's wondherful to think how—cloth stretches!

"Neal," said the wife, on perceiving him drest, "where are you bound for?"

"Faith, *for life*," replied Neal, with a mitigated swagger; and I'd as soon, if it had been the will of Provid——"

He paused.

"Where are you going?" asked the wife, a second time.

"Why," he answered, "only to the dance at Jemmy Connolly's; I'll be back early."

"Don't go," said the wife.

"I'll go," said Neal, "if the whole counthry was to prevent me. Thunder an' lightnin', woman, who am I?" he exclaimed, in a loud but

rather infirm voice ; " amn't I Neal Malone, that never met a *man* who'd fight him ! Neal Malone, that was never beat by *man !* Why, tare-an-ounze, woman ! Whoo ! I'll get enraged some time, an' play the divil ? Who's afeard, I say ?"

" *Dont go,*" added the wife, a third time, giving Neal a significant look in the face.

*In about another half-hour, Neal sat down quietly to his business, instead of going to the dance !*

Neal now turned himself, like many a sage in similar circumstances, to philosophy ; that is to say—he began to shake his head upon principle, after the manner of the schoolmaster. He would, indeed, have preferred the bottle upon principle ; but there was no getting at the bottle, except through the wife ; and it so happened that by the time it reached him, there was little consolation left in it. Neal bore all in silence ; for silence, his friend had often told him, was a proof of wisdom.

Soon after this, Neal, one evening, met Mr. O'Connor by chance upon a plank which crossed a river. This plank was only a foot in breadth, so that no two individuals could pass each other upon it. We cannot find words in which to express the dismay of both, on finding that they absolutely glided past one another without collision.

Both paused, and surveyed each other solemnly ; but the astonishment was all on the side of Mr. O'Connor.

" Neal," said the schoolmaster, " by all the household gods, I conjure you to speak, that I may be assured you live ! "

The ghost of a blush crossed the church-yard visage of the tailor.

" Oh ! " he exclaimed, " why the devil did you tempt me to marry a wife."

" Neal," said his friend, " answer me in the most solemn manner possible—throw into your countenance all the gravity you can assume ; speak as if you were under the hands of the hangman, with the rope about your neck, for the question is, indeed, a trying one which I am about to put. Are you still ' blue-moulded for want of beating ? ' "

The tailor collected himself to make a reply ; he put one leg out—the very leg which he used to show in triumph to his friend ; but, alas, how dwindled ! He opened his waistcoat, and lapped it round him, until he looked like a weasel on its hind legs. He then raised himself up on his tip toes, and, in an awful whisper, replied, " No ! ! ! the devil a bit I'm *blue-mowlded* for want of a batin'."

The schoolmaster shook his head in his own miserable manner ; but, alas ! he soon perceived that the tailor was as great an adept at shaking the head as himself. Nay, he saw that there was a calamitous refinement —a delicacy of shake in the tailor's vibrations, which gave to his own nod a very commonplace character.

The next day the tailor took in his clothes ; and from time to time continued to adjust them to the dimensions of his shrinking person. The schoolmaster and he, whenever they could steal a moment, met and sympathised together. Mr. O'Connor, however, bore up somewhat better than Neal. The latter was subdued in heart and in spirit ; thoroughly, completely, and intensely vanquished. His features became sharpened

by misery, for a termagant wife is the whetstone on which all the calamities of a hen-pecked husband are painted by the devil. He no longer strutted as he was wont to do; he no longer carried a cudgel as if he wished to wage a universal battle with mankind. He was now a married man.—Sneakingly, and with a cowardly crawl did he creep along as if every step brought him nearer to the gallows. The schoolmaster's march of misery was far slower than Neal's: the latter distanced him. Before three years passed, he had shrunk up so much, that he could not walk abroad of a windy day without carrying weights in his pockets to keep him firm on the earth, which he once trod with the step of a giant. He again sought the schoolmaster, with whom indeed he associated as much as possible. Here he felt certain of receiving sympathy; nor was he disappointed. That worthy, but miserable man, and Neal, often retired beyond the hearing of their respective wives, and supported each other by every argument in their power. Often have they been heard, in the dusk of evening, singing behind a remote hedge that melancholy ditty, "Let us *both* be unhappy together;" which rose upon the twilight breeze with a cautious quaver of sorrow truly heart-rending and lugubrious.

"Neal," said Mr. O'Connor, on one of those occasions, "here is a book which I recommend to your perusal; it is called 'The Afflicted Man's Companion;' try, if you cannot glean some consolation out of it."

"Faith," said Neal, I'm for ever oblaged to you, but I don't want it. I've had 'The Afflicted Man's Companion' too long, and divil an atom of consolation I can get out of it. I have *one* o' them I tell you; but, be me sowl, I'll not undhertake *a pair* o' them. The very name 's enough for me." They then separated.

The tailor's *vis vitæ* must have been powerful, or he would have died. In two years more his friends could not distinguish him from his own shadow; a circumstance which was of great inconvenience to him. Several grasped at the hand of the shadow instead of his; and one man was near paying it five and sixpence for making a pair of small-clothes. Neal, it is true, undeceived him with some trouble; but candidly admitted that he was not able to carry home the money. It was difficult, indeed, for the poor tailor to bear what he felt; it is true he bore it as long as he could: but at length he became suicidal, and often had thoughts of "making his own *quietus* with his bare bodkin." After many deliberations and afflictions, he ultimately made the attempt; but, alas! he found that the blood of the Malones refused to flow upon so ignominious an occasion. So *he* solved the phenomenon; although the truth was, that his blood was not "i' the vein" for it; none was to be had. What then was to be done? He resolved to get rid of life by some process; and the next that occurred to him was hanging. In a solemn spirit he prepared a selvage, and suspended himself from the rafter of his workshop; but here another disappointment awaited him—he would not hang. Such was his want of gravity, that his own weight proved insufficient to occasion his death by mere suspension. His third attempt was at drowning, but he was too light to sink; all the elements—all his own energies joined themselves, he thought, in a wicked conspiracy to save his life. Having thus tried every avenue to destruction, and failed in all, he felt like a man

doomed to live for ever. Henceforward he shrunk and shrivelled by slow degrees, until in the course of time he became so attenuated, that the grossness of human vision could no longer reach him.

This, however, could not last always. Though still alive, he was to all intents and purposes imperceptible. He could now only be heard; he was reduced to a mere essence—the very echo of human existence, *vox et præterea nihil.* It is true the schoolmaster asserted that he occasionally caught passing glimpses of him ; but that was because he had been himself nearly spiritualised by affliction, and his visual ray purged in the furnace of domestic tribulation. By and by Neal's voice lessened, got fainter and more indistinct, until at length nothing but a doubtful murmur could be heard, which ultimately could scarcely be distinguished from a ringing in the ears.

Such was the awful and mysterious fate of the tailor, who, as a hero, could not of course die ; he merely dissolved like an icicle, wasted into immateriality, and finally melted away beyond the perception of mortal sense. Mr. O'Connor is still living, and once more in the fulness of perfect health and strength. His wife, however, we may as well hint, has been dead more than two years.

LONDON:
BRADBURY AND EVANS, PRINTERS, WHITEFRIARS.